Poems of B.W. Ball

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THE MERRIMACK RIVER

HELLENICS AND OTHER POEMS

BY

BENJAMIN W. BALL

EDITED, WITH AN INTRODUCTION, BY

FREDERICK F. AYER

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TO

MY WIFE.

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INTRODUCTION.

[Benjamin West Ball is the son of Benjamin Ball and Mary Rogers, and was born in Concord, Massachusetts, January 27, 1823. His parents were Concord people, and his ancestors were from Wiltshire, England, and among the early settlers of the town. He had a great-uncle, famous in his day and locality for his strength and pluck, killed in the Battle of Bunker Hill. His childhood and early youth were passed in his native town, until he entered the Academy at Groton, Massachusetts, now known as the Lawrence Academy, where he was prepared for college. After leaving college he returned to Concord, where he passed much of his time cultivating the acquaintance and philosophy of Emerson. Writing of himself, he says: "It was my good fortune to have lived, in my boyhood and youth, in such beautiful New England towns as Concord, Harvard, and Groton, almost under the shadow of Wachusett Mountain. If I have any of the *mens divinior* of a poet, it was kindled and nurtured by the scenery of the above towns."

Of himself in 1851, when he published his first volume of poems, he writes: "I was almost a pagan at that time, being in fact a Greek of the age of Perikles, and an anachronism in the century or Anno Domini in which I was born. But thanks to the writings of Carlyle, Macaulay, Tennyson, and Dickens, who were running their marvellous literary careers in my youth, I soon became a modern." He studied law with John P. Robinson, of Lowell, the hero of Lowell's poem with the refrain:

"John P. Robinson he,
Says he won't vote
For Governor B."

He practiced law for two years in Lawrence, Massachusetts. In 1853 he married Miss Dollie S. Hurd of Rochester, New Hampshire, where he now resides. In 1856 he became editor of the *Lowell Courier* during the famous Frèmont campaign.

He subsequently became a Washington correspondent during the Lecompton Constitution controversy, which immediately preceded and heralded the civil war. Although not a native of the old Granite State he was a graduate of Dartmouth College of the large class of 1842, and is reputed as the foremost Greek scholar ever graduated from New Hampshire's ancient seat of learning.

His contributions to the *Atlantic Monthly* and other publications on topics connected with ancient Greek history, philosophy, and poetry, show his profound attainments as a scholar. An article of his entitled "Women's Rights in Ancient Athens," which was published in the *Atlantic Monthly* for March, 1871, attracted wide attention, both by reason of the nature of the subject and its masterly treatment and the familiarity which it evinced with the social system of the most famous city of antiquity.

A volume of poems published in Boston as long ago as 1851, by Munroe & Co., which was highly praised by the late Ralph Waldo Emerson, gave him a reputation as a poet which has been maintained by his numerous subsequent poems, widely published. Of himself he says: "I have been a bookworm rather than a man of action; devoted to ideas more than to anything else. If I were to write an autobigraphy, it would be principally an account of the history of my mental development."]

THOSE who, holding an irreverent view of matter, have embraced a philosophy of materialism, and proclaimed this age in general, and our country in particular, materialistic, proscribe poetry, and

offer to show that man has outgrown, and can live without, the gentle maid. Material prosperity and materialism cannot hold each other up; for one falls as the other rises. Nor do they long hold hands. Our country, the home of material prosperity unexampled, rocks the cradle of spiritual development. Here, as nowhere else, Poetry, the daughter of feeling and imagination, is always welcome. We devote less time to her than others do, perhaps; we may be less spoken, less demonstrative; but not the less observing and appreciative of her charms.

What men feel counts for quite as much as what they think. A new syllogism or equation adds bricks to the edifice; but the complete structure has been foreordained and pictorial in the imagination. Good poetry can no more be put aside than good men; for the poem is the man. It is, nevertheless, no cause for wonderment that, in a country teeming with the wealth of earth, men should become absorbed in the race for riches, and pending the struggle, forget to search for, or to wear as ornaments, the jewels of the mind. Existence first—growth afterwards.

But man is a cunningly fashioned instrument; though he may be out of tune for centuries, he is never out of date; and when tuned again, he will breathe forth symphonies in response to touches by the deft fingers of Nature, the Arch-Artist. The reason is that, to some extent, all men are poets. The sacred fire has warmed and lighted the race

from its early dawn ; for Darwin * tells us that his was kindled "during the earliest ages of which we have any record." Also, according to Darwin, Poetry is the Child of Song. This accounts for music in the offspring—"The planet-like music of poetry," as Sydney describes it. Poetry is human greatness set to music. It is the soul in opera. And also in the words of Coleridge, it is "the blossom and the fragrance of all human knowledge, human thoughts, human passions, emotions, language." Its ever rising and winding highways lead us, we know not whither ; while along its wondrous avenues we travel near to the shores of the Eternal Ocean, and catch, at times, a strain from the music of its endless waves.

In the spring of 1890 I persuaded Mr. Ball to publish a complete edition of his poetical writings, believing that they would supply a want much felt for a poet in full step with the majestic march of modern thought in the progress of the sciences, and the development of a higher philosophy. Poetry, like all else, lives its life ; fulfils its functions with the powers with which it has been endowed ; and grows old in the process. We pay homage to Homer for his performances and his genius ; not because he is much in touch with our world, within or without. He sang of Myths, which to him were realities and science. These lure us still, as Myths. But the tide which was coming in, in Homer's years, is still rising. It has carried away landmarks which

* "Descent of Man," p. 570.

were thought to be enduring ; and while tossing up new pearls, and making new continents, is gradually destroying its former work, and washing away what were once regarded as "footprints on the sands of time." This persistent and pitiless wave of evolution sweeps over all nature, and nothing escapes. Poetry is no exception, and must pass away when it has ceased to propagate itself by creating poets. Most remains unsung. This, doubtless, will always be so ; for man will forever remain larger than his work.

"The tower, but not the spire we build."

or, in the words of Holmes :

"Our whitest pearl we never find ;
Our ripest fruit we never reach ;
The flowering moments of the mind
Drop half their petals in our speech."

In addition, there remain new eras, with their new creations of knowledge, types, systems, ideas and images ; their sentiments ; their hopes and fears. Ball has been a life-long, ravenous student in many branches of knowledge, as his voluminous prose writings would readily bear witness. He has especially devoted himself to, and become largely versed in ancient and modern literature ; in civil and natural history, metaphysics, philosophy, politics, and the natural sciences. He has been a constant and copious contributor to our capital magazines and reviews ; and has always been in company with modern progress on its journey to higher aims

and nobler theories. He sings the sciences, and paints philosophy in kingly colors. He recasts the precious metals once used in the art, in moulds of modern model and device. In 1851 he published a small volume of poems in Boston,* which went through several editions, and obtained much popularity, in New England especially, eliciting the very favorable notice of Ralph Waldo Emerson. They were the songs of his youth ; and I have retained a few of them in this edition, as they are both bright and fresh ; and exhibit the early unfolding of his poetic genius. These poems built the substructure of his reputation in New England as a poet of versatile and extraordinary gifts. He has, notwithstanding, persistently refused to allow the bellows to be put under his wings ; and more from a supersensitive reluctance to put himself forward than from any other cause I am able to discover, has suffered the last forty years to elapse without any attempt at publication ; albeit that during this time he has been an overflowing composer, and the poems embraced in this edition are not the half of what he has written. Many, or most of them have indeed shown their heads at times in the periodicals ; or have been seen strolling through the crowded thoroughfares of the daily press. But they all wandered astray, like lost children ; only, perhaps, to attract, by chance, the casual notice of a passer-by ; or to pass unseen.

* "Elfin Land and Other Poems." James Munroe & Company.

These rambling progeny of the spirit I have at last succeeded in gathering together under one roof. However high the estimate Ball has entertained for his own productions, he has surely kept it to himself. They are the full ears of corn that hang down. Poets enjoy no immunity from the august decree that man does not attain to great stature while afflicted with a vomiting egotism, contracted by wallowing in himself. These poems were written without the promise or prospect of reward; and therefore, without compulsion. Hence they were produced naturally and cheerfully, from time to time, prompted only by the spirit of "free imagination—all wings," which presides over such destinies.

On the banks of Concord's Indian stream, Ball first tasted the day. There his childhood and youth basked beneath the azure dome, tumbling on carpets of eternal green; the air loaded with the fragrance of blossoming fields; the days translated into music by fluting birds and æolian pines, and groaning oaks the thorough-bass of the forest: and his nights made brilliant by the solitaires of God set forever in the overmastering deep. Here was the natural cradle of a poet. Here he found himself in Nature's lap. He grew up at her feet, and holding fast to her hand, she led him about over her New England hills and meadows, whispering her secrets, and showing him her gardens, where he plucked most of the delicate buds which are here unfolded.

After leaving college, he returned to his native

town, where he spent a year making the acquaintance of Concord's transcendent Sage. He was occasionally at Emerson's fireside ; enjoyed the use of his library ; and partook copiously of his philosophy. In a letter written in 1843 to Thoreau, which appears in Sanborn's life of the hermit of Walden Pond, Emerson says : "Young Ball (B. W.) has been to see me, and is a prodigious reader, and a youth of great promise." The poetical side of Emerson impressed him strongly ; and traces of this influence appear frequently in his writings. His feeling ode (page 48) In Memoriam of this distinguished pilot of his youth attests the lasting deep esteem and deeper fondness with which he still cherishes his memory.

To winding Concord's pleasant vale
Through all the countless future years,
Hadjis devout will never fail,
Though nought above his grave appears

But flowery sward and simple stone,
Such as a sage's rest beseem,
Asleep amid the pine woods lone,
Beneath whose boughs he loved to dream.

There still the Evening Star will shine
With beams as bright as lured his youth
The city's tumult to resign
For high and holy quest of truth.

Onward his Indian stream will run
Through pensive plain and meadow green
But not in all the years will one
Like him upon its marge be seen

To Ball, Emerson was more poet than philosopher, and even his philosophy "leaned to Poetry's side."

The poet is a non-conformist; all things, all men, therefore, conform to him. He leads without following. When battle must be made, he is the first to strike. As Ball says of Byron and Shelley:

> They felt the impulse, wild and free
> Of Europe bent on liberty;
> While through their glowing numbers came
> The Revolution's breath of flame.

The poet turns under old turf, that fresh flowers may spring. He sows without knowing who shall reap; and never hears the final echo of his song. Whatever he touches, changes color; while whatsoever touches him, is melted up by his magic fire, and blown forth into the "glass of fashion." Appearances and experiences are moulded ever into new forms, which transcend experience. The thread and thrum of the universe are woven into brocade of every archetype and tint in the loom of thought.

Very much that passes current under the title of poetry in these days, is without character and frivolous. In common with institutions and men of like construction, such productions, like froth on a glass of ale, rise to the top from very lightness; there to laugh and hiss and sputter for a moment; to be blown away by a breath, or to vanish in thin air; while the rich and ponderous ale lies sleeping underneath.

The great office of poetry is to make all men poets ; to break the chains by which we are bound to facts and limits, and set us free ; to open the doors of this world of prisons, and let us forth. The torch and keys have been delivered to the poet. Man is larger than his cage ; wider than himself ; higher and deeper than the universe that meets his gaze. Enlargement is what he needs and covets still. Not talent, but size. Breadth as well as length. To this end, the telescope and not the microscope. Farsightedness comes from looking at great distances. All this requires room, more room. Mountain heights, with views of the horizon the compass round. Extraspection instead of introspection. Though "the Universe is the mirror of the soul," not all has yet been imaged. The poet supplies us with space. We are led out and aloft, where we can see. Poetry that may lead us thus, is sky-born, and must cling to the skies. It must, therefore, first above all things possess that serious nature or σπουδαιότης of Aristotle, which Matthew Arnold translates into "high seriousness." This quality is among the most attractive and omnipresent of Ball's charms. The Ionian Wise Men, page 356, exclaim :

> Our guide was reason-regulated sense,
> To which eternal Truth unmasks her charms ;
> Through Nature's veil we saw Omnipotence
> Upholding all things with unwearied arms.
>
> We knew ourselves, and, diving, found within
> A depth as fathomless as that above,—

We knew that right and justice only win ;
  Their law with being's fibre is inwove.

The beauteous towns are dust, where we abode ;
  They crumbled 'neath the footfalls of the years ;
Yet still the cloudless heavens which o'er them glowed
  Are shining down with their unmouldering spheres.

And like those ancient heavens our words survive,
  Because they syllable the truth of things ;
For goods which lure the herd we did not strive ;—
  'T was wisdom, reason, gave our thoughts their wings.

For a beautiful expression of this quality, the last two verses of Homer's Anthropomorphism are unsurpassed.

Dewdrops as of dawn eternal
  On the myths of Homer lie ;
Back from age of science, reason,
  To his fable-world we fly ;
In his beauteous dreams, illusions
  Bathe as in some fount of youth ;
Gladly barter for their freshness
  All the trophies won by Truth.

But to Homer, too, did conscience
  Teach the lore of right and wrong ;
Dictates of the higher reason
  Dominate his epic song.
E'en his gods, like men, a higher
  Power than their own wills did own,
Not in terms of mortal nature
  To be imaged or made known.

Here, too, is a tender sorrow over our farewell to the Myths, after we have been kidnapped by knowl-

edge. This "high seriousness" in Ball is often inwoven with a certain sadness which in fact pervades much of his poetry; not the melancholy of Gray, nor the despair of Motherwell; perhaps only the vibrations of that endless chain of sadness which rolls over all finite existence. In the colloquy between the Nightwind and Poet, page 208, this feeling perhaps finds its strongest expression; and as a true picture of that loneliness with which humanity is at times oppressed, will not fail to touch the sympathies of the reader.

POET.

Vain are all things human, mortal,
Seems your gusty moan to say;
Like to leaves man's generations
Feel the blight of swift decay.
Like to leaves his hopes are blasted
By the frost of chill mischance—
Vainly 'gainst his limits strives he,
Thrall of fate and circumstance.

NIGHTWIND.

What is earth but one vast charnel,
Dust of fleeting tribes of men
Sinking back into her bosom,
Since the flight of years began?
Whatsoe'er they did or suffered,
Lethe claimed them all at last—
I, the Nightwind, unforgetting,
Chant their requiem with my blast.

POET.

Airy minstrel of the midnight,
General wailer o'er the dead,
Annual filling earth and heaven
With thy moans for all things fled,
Never sang a human poet
Strains so weirdly sad as thine,
Strains that with a wild emotion
Thrill this lonely heart of mine.

But these feelings never degenerate into pessimism, or one-sidedness. His poems retain the hopefulness and energy of youth, although most of them were written after his youth was past. As was said of Marlowe, he sings,

"With mouth of Gold and morning in his eyes."

Largeness and force are traits salient and striking above all else in his poetry. Largeness in imagination and grasp of thought; and force of similitude and expression. Combined with these is a chaste and delicate sense of the mysterious display of beauty throughout all nature, which will not fail to hold the reader captive. This union of great strength with beauty in congenial wedlock,

"Uplifting strength and beauty richly wrought,"

is rare in a poet; leastwise to the like extent that we discover it in Ball. Witness the verses on page 153, under the modest caption of Lines.

A few fresh flakes of wintry snow,
'T is true my unthinned locks bestrow,

Whilst thou, by whom my heart is rent,
All may-bloom art and lilac scent.
Breathes round thee, darling, soft and low,
Of youth the violet-perfumed wind;
Again I feel my bosom glow
With dreams I thought were left behind.
But ah! 't will never fade nor die,
Love's passionate idolatry.
Where blooms a form as fair as thine,
He buildeth, as of old, his shrine!

Keeping time with these qualities is his originality. New keys are pitched, and old tunes are not thrummed through new variations. True poetry is a symbol or manifestation of force which is persistent. It acts as a stimulant, and re-creates itself. We are lighted and set on fire; and though the manifestation in us may not take the form of written poems, life will cease to be prose, and we discover that we are both poem and poet.

The reigning element of this force is originality. For that which is new to us, sets us in motion, and we become new to ourselves. Poetry which lacks this element may tickle the senses, and please the fancy; but its effect is lethean, and we sleep Ball is free from any symptoms of what Carlyle terms "the paralysis of cant." He is the sole proprietor of his methods; and himself wholly in his conceptions and imagery. His poetry is "steeped throughout with a certain keen and pungent individuality, which leaves a haunting impression behind it." His style is forceful, bold, and often caustic; yet unaffected and clear; abounding in a variety of

metres, in which he writes with ease and skill. He has what Bradley calls "the gift of style, and of making words sing"; and what Gosse describes as "audacity of thought, and the thunders of a massive line." Ball is both an ancient and a modern. A life of devotion to the products of Greek civilization, has given him a masterful grasp of things Hellenic, to which the unique assortment of poems under the title of "Hellenics" amply testifies. These lyrics delineate the customs, life, and habits of the ancient Greeks; their philosophy and religion; their struggles in peace and war, their

"——isle-sown sea and temple-crested shore";

including a number of translations from their immortals. I do not discover anything in all his writings of more pleasing excellence than his ode to Hellas, page 273, which appears to be a sort of dedication of the Hellenics.

Behind her long-drawn, serried columns gleam
Uplifting strength and beauty richly wrought,
While marble altars waft a fragrant steam
Of Orient myrrh from lands of morning brought.

The volumed vapors roll in light away,
O'er isle-sown sea and temple-crested shore,
While oread-haunted in her summer's ray,
Her thymy mountains tower for evermore.

These Hellenian flowers, gathered from the graves of those whose monuments will never crum-

ble nor wear away, are perhaps the deepest colored and sweetest-scented of all his collection.

No impression half as deep has been made upon him from any source as from the aroma of that dazzling civilization, with which he became intoxicated. On the other side, Ball is a modern of still higher type. Having grown up with the sciences and philosophy, he has kept *en rapport* with their development. He is an entire convert to the doctrines of evolution as last and best stated ; and to the philosophy that has been erected upon those doctrines, as far as the edifice has been constructed, cutting loose as much as may be from an anthropomorphic philosophy and religion. See the poem entitled Herschel's Star-Clusters, page 245, where, in explaining the all pervasive influence of law and order throughout the universe, he proclaims :

Through boundless space and boundless time
That sternest order reigneth,
And into one harmonious Whole
Atoms and orbs constraineth,—
Through galaxies of countless suns
Drear space like gold-dust strowing ;
Through nebulæ, those clouds of worlds
In starry strata glowing,—

The same unwearied forces work
And make whole systems blossom
In stellar clusters like the flowers
Upon our planet's bosom ;
For nebulous vapors far away,
On optic glasses looming,
Are garden-beds of nascent worlds
Like banks of violets blooming.

O Force of forces, Heart of hearts
In central mystery beating ;
Though everywhere in star and clod,
From eye of sense retreating ;—
The forms that fade are still renewed ;
The fire of life burns ever ;
Thee from the glowing universe,
Nor time nor space can sever.

Here truly, in the words of Emerson, Ball "strings worlds like beads upon his thought."

Ball is of the larger mould of men ; a cosmopolite of nature. No compromise with mediocrity ; and no negotiations with the distorted spirits of barbaric ancestors, whose grinning, ghastly skulls are still dangled before us, that we may shrink and wince. To him is wonderment that the children of this generation should creep and cringe at the mere sight of a whip hung over their heads by men whose "exsufflicate and blown surmises," and fusty philosophy, long since decayed, have mingled and become one with the hydrogen of their bones. From the dark ages we came forth in darkness. Then came the age of candles—more candles than light. The era of candles is now fading away, because we have turned on the light of this century, which is the light of lightning. The poet's torch is now illuminated by the fearful spark ; and, soaring higher, the "winged man" bears us gently with him, still teaching us to fly. Poetry is the wings of thought, on which we are wafted higher than thought alone can reach.

Albeit Ball is an enthusiastic pioneer in the search for truth, ever ready to put the axe to the tree that is dead, he is no wanton iconoclast, delighting to destroy. He does not go slashing about with a stick among the daisies. With trained experience and a skillful hand, he applies the pruning-hook where ignorance or superstition has cropped out in the tree of knowledge. He stands in the first rank of those who are convinced that the spirit which winged us up from the prairies does not part with its wings; that the Garden of Eden lies beyond, and not behind us; and that the catarhine ape and slimy monster of the Ocean tides are the Hell from which we sprang.

Poetry is still the loveliest maid mankind has wooed. Her lips are "wreathed with smiles"; her voice is gentle, and her thought sincere. By whistling brooks and Ocean's thundering shores her paths are laid; while through the storms of life her hand is seen stretched out towards the weary; holding up the overburdened by their lot. To this "Goddess of bright dreams," humanity will still return, "when other helpers fail" and pale away, to light their path and lighten their load; to drown violence with her singing, and misery with her tears; to teach them that they fall from the breasts of the Mighty Mother, only to be caught in her lap; to point them through the night in the direction of the dawning morning; the immortal songstress of their faith and their hopes.

Such is my faith in the omnipresence of poetic

nature in man, and such my measure of the excellence of the poems here presented to the public, that I may be pardoned for venturing to indulge the belief that these full, clear notes of this Swan of the Merrimack will not fail to discover themselves already pouring forth their original harmonies in the hearts of many.

F. F. A.

New York, May, 1892.

TO THE MERRIMACK RIVER.

REST on thy banks were sweet to him
Whose youth thy gleaming waters knew,
While requiem sang thy pine boughs dim,
And dreamed o'erhead thy skies of blue.
Thou art to me the stream of streams,
Thou and thy storied confluent clear.
Thy flow brings back of youth the dreams,
And many a youth-time comrade dear.

'T were sweet with such to be at rest
By thee, O mountain-cradled river;
To find the peace in earth's green breast,
Which harassed life is craving ever.
Here while with scented breeze and flower
Beguiles the saunterer's step young May,
I cast me down an idle hour
Upon thy banks to while away.

Thy darkling wood-paths are as still
As found I them in days of yore,
When tired of streets I took my fill
Of solitude upon thy shore.

Thy pine-plumed steeps and waters wear
The old familiar look, but when
Along the city's streets I fare,
I see not the familiar men.

For Nature stays with changeless mien,
While men forever come and go—
New faces haunt the old-time scene
We haunted in the long-ago.
The spot remains with earth and sky,
Unchanged around, beneath, above,
But saddening with its vacancy
Of comrades gone, we used to love.

But on thy marge, O glorious stream,
Let me not yield to mood of gloom.
What though thy waters still will gleam
Unaltered, when I 've met my doom?
Thou art a mere insensate thing,
A creature of the cloud and air,
And to thy shores did I not bring
A seeing eye, thou wert not fair.

Thy sunny ripples, what are they
If not sensations bright in me?
The light of spirit makes thee stray
In long-drawn glory to the sea,
As if thou wert a living might,
A conscious movement, ceaseless, grand,
From thy far natal mountain height,
E'en to the ocean's deltaëd strand.

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

WHERE are the dead? or are we sparks,—
naught more,—
From mindless matter ever upward flung,
And ever falling back to whence we sprung,
Brief gleams of conscious life like fireflies o'er
Midsummer meads, that flash thro' twilight dun?
If all still live who e'er were born, no shore
Of bliss or woe, which olden poets sung,
Can hold the endless throngs which thither pour.
But disembodied spirits may not know
Or space or time, our limitations here—
To some undreamed-of, unimagined sphere
Of psychic being journeying hence may go,
Where lapsing hours, days, years, no longer flow,
But we, pure *energies*, forever glow.

Where are the dead? In mouldering bivouac laid
Beneath the sods, expecting trump of doom
At length to break the torpor of the tomb,
And with dread clangor summon every shade
To Rhadamanthine judgment, tremulous, afraid?
Whence some depart where flowers Elysian bloom
In endless summer, others penal fires consume,
But end not, fires no mercy e'er allayed.
Where are the dead? Returning evermore
After a draught of Lethè to rebreathe

The breath of life, again to bask beneath
The light of sun and star, beholding o'er
And o'er again spring's budding wreath
Of blossoms, summer, fall, and winter hoar?

Where are the dead? On endless journey bound,
Star-travelling pilgrims through eternal space,
Whose unreturning flight is ever found
Still farther on to some new tarrying-place?
To whom no orb becomes familiar ground,
But only milestone in their goalless race,
Which pauses not at many a gulf profound
'Twixt galaxies of starless interspace?
Than such appalling flight more sweet would seem
The rest and joys of old Elysiums fair,
Whereof the bards of other days did dream,
Green isles and meads, that basked in stormless air,
Where life was easy without toil or care,
And darkness veiled not festal daylight's beam.

Where are the dead? Transmigratory round
Of all earth's forms running, now grovelling low
In bestial shapes, and now reclimbing slow
To human, till at last released, unbound
From miseries of personal life, they know
Nirvana's apathy and calm profound?
With many an answer thus the creeds o'erflow.
Though ne'er returning traveller was found
From the Undiscovered Country's bourne to say
What lot or destiny awaits us there,

When sweet vicissitude of night and day
Leaving, we on Death's exodus shall fare
Into a gloom, where glimmers not a ray
To gild the darkness of sepulchral air.

ASIA TO AMERICA.

THOU swallowest Europe's dregs without a qualm,
But at my gnat with a wry face dost strain—
Her unkempt peasants to thy borders swarm
And thou to welcome them art ever fain.

Thou call'st thy grandame Asia *heathen*, when
Thy creed was plucked a feather from my crest—
My populous loins could people earth again,
While unsunned riches lurk within my breast.

Mother of dead empires, e'en yet I feel
My future with a mightier grandeur fraught—
I sleep, but through my slumber visions steal,
Wherewith compared thy brightest are as naught.

A tongue of land between the oceans pent,
What are thy narrow limits matched with mine?
Measures a hemisphere *my* continent,
While barren sea-waves crowd and jostle thine.

Europe and thou a howling waste would be,
Had not my Aryans westward streamed of yore,
Your boastful tribes are stragglers all from me;
Kelt, Teuton, red-man, I remotely bore.

Though old no wrinkles corrugate my brow—
From fount of morning drink I vigor still,—
While through my giant limbs I feel e'en now
The New Time's spirit like a wine-cup thrill.

HUMANITY; OR, THE COLOSSAL MAN.

E'EN the moiety of it breathing,
Stirring in the cheerful light,
Passes third of life unconscious,
Sunk in slumbers of the night.
But the dead and gone, the vanished,—
Who can count the dim host o'er,
All the shadowy generations
Who have flourished heretofore?

All together, dead and living,
Since the human shape began,
Organ of self-conscious spirit,
Form one vast Colossal Man.
Cave-roofed, dwelt he in the twilight
Of the prehistoric time;
Beast-like first, he gradual lifted
From the earth a front sublime.

Growth diffused o'er countless ages
And the round of earthly space,
Still o'er death and change triumphant,
Upward moves the human race.

Many-climed and hued and tongued it
Is the same at heart and core,
Wheresoe'er its tribes and races
Zones of earth are scattered o'er.

Vanguard of it, beauty, genius,
Make like fabled angels seem;
While its rearward, low-browed, bestial,
Scarce of reason shows a gleam.
O'er it toiling, sinning, warring,
Striving happiness to taste,
Shine the silent constellations
In the heavens' boundless waste.

Yawns the earth beneath it marching,
Hides its tired ones evermore;
While, to fill its thinned ranks, new-born,
Eager generations pour.
Still need, greed, desire, and foresight,
And ideal longings vain,
Keep its myriads in motion,
Seeking pleasure, shunning pain.

'T is a product, evolution
Of creative, nameless Power—
Slowly, slowly 't is unfolded
More and more to perfect flower.
First by sense with bright illusions
'T was environed in its youth,
But, at length by Reason guided,
Bows it now to sway of Truth.

NAMES.

NAMES are indeed but smoke that hide the glow
Of heaven, the poisonous breath of ages flown,
When neither earth nor heaven were truly known
And roof'd fond man a godful sky-arch low.
Though that is gone, dull bigots still repeat
The empty formulæ of creeds outworn,
As if to fixed ideas the race was born
And Dulness o'er us held perpetual seat.
Blow, breath of Reason, with a cyclone's might,
And sweep the rubbish of the past away!
While earthwide flashes thy meridian day
Purging of every tribe the mental sight.
Cumber the earth too long a Church and State
Which own no ties with things of current date.

EUROPE—AMERICA.

PROEM.

EUROPE, no more art thou personified
By maiden of the Grecian myth, whom o'er
The waves with fluttering vesture Jupiter
Bore tauriform: thou art a matron now,
With ripened and imperial loveliness,

But lines of thought and care are furrowed in
Thy queenly face. Though full of historied years,
And many-era'd, grand experiences,
Thou still refusest to be old, to lower
Thy haughty glance, proud with the consciousness
Of domination wide as earth, in sign whereof
Thy brow upbears a towery diadem,
Such as the ancient Mountain Mother wore,
When lion-drawn she through the nations rode,
Largess of roses on her car receiving
From roofs and pinnacles idolatrous ;
And not alone thine eye imperiousness
Of martial sway rays forth, but of a rule
More high, august,—reason's supremacy,
Prerogative of thine Aryan colonists.

A bright auroral beam begins to touch
Thy forehead with purpureal light, the glow
Of freedom, which thy daughter o'er the sea
Hath from her cradle known—thy daughter soon
To be thy peer. Palladian beauty marks
Her even now, the port of empire large,
As she confronts thee with unquailing glance.
Her head is filleted with coronal
Of maize-ears, scarlet foliage ; she stands
Upon a mountain's brow, with sky above
Unfathomably deep of breezy blue,
And gazes dreamily o'er landscape vast,
Autumnal, iridescent,—forests, streams,
And lakes, and yellowing harvest-fields and blue
Sierras in the distance gleaming dim

A landscape half-reclaimed from sylvan shade,
Where natures wild and tame jostle each other,
But lifting heavenward many a dome and spire
Of nascent city, young metropolis,
With many-nationed, many-languaged throngs.

What though an ocean rolls and roars between
Europe, America? That hinders not
An intercontinental colloquy.

But America is not Europe's child
Purely: there is a native wildness in
Her blood proper to sylvan hemisphere.
The youngest of the mighty Aryan brood
Of nations, she is the lithest, loveliest,
With clearest eye, most hopeful, radiant.

COLLOQUY.

Europa.

O crowned with tasselled maize and hidden long
'Neath melancholy boughs, o'er waves unknown,
The ministers of memory—History, Song—
Your blank, inglorious centuries disown.

America.

Better my uneventful years than thine
Gloom-fraught with deeds and superstitions dire;
Sweeter the whispers of my desert pine
Than groans from dungeon, rack, and penal fire.

Europa.

Thou speak'st of ugly things of long ago
Now mouldering to dust, disused, outgrown :
My forehead, too, with freedom's roseate glow
At last begins to glimmer like thine own.

America.

I but flung back thy taunt : alas ! I, too,
My hateful memories had, even before
Thy dark Iberian bigots came and threw
The gleam of torture-flames upon my shore.

Europa.

Thy later children throng with eager eyes
My storied, battle-stricken soil ; where'er
My gorgeous minsters, palaces, arise,
With long, admiring gaze, they linger near.

America.

Ah, yes, my later children,—those who sprung
Remotely from thy loins,—at times they feel,
For the old lands by many a minstrel sung,
A longing and homesickness o'er them steal !

Europa.

Not e'en the splendor of thy blue, blue heaven,
The golden plenty of thy prairies vast,
Nor perfect freedom, can my lingering leaven
From out your new-world bosoms wholly cast.

America.

If memory's magic draws my sons to thee,
Thine own are swarming hither,—those to whom
Thou hast a harsh step-mother been,—they flee
Westward, escaping a plebeian doom.

Europa.

My bounds are straitened, and I cast them forth
Strong-armed and simple-hearted to thine aid:
Thine untilled acres, east and west and north,
Are by their toil in cereal gold arrayed.

America.

Alas! thine outcasts hither to me bring
The hates and bigotries of thy dark years;
In my free air to creeds they fiercely cling,
Which drenched of old thy soil with blood and tears.

Europa.

A truce to taunts, O sister, young, serene,
With Hesper glittering on thy cloudless brow,
Who wear'st of hope the joyous, dauntless mien,
While me dark memories and sorrows bow.

America.

Since science has our ocean-sundered shores
Made touch and thrill, thy sorrows now are mine;
Errors and wrongs of eld my heart deplores;
Fate will henceforth our lots together twine.

E'en now thy daughter France, whose lilies long
Their gorgeous beauty spread o'er land and sea
Has doffed the crown and, renovated, strong,
At Freedom's board sits clothed and sane with me.

Europa.

If I with cares and wrinkles premature
Thy youthful brow, perchance, have furrowed o'er,
My myriad martyrs did for thee endure
Fierce struggle, wrong and death, in days of yore.

America.

I was a care-free, sylvan maiden then,
Listening the pine-tree's whispers in the wild;
Roaming o'er prairie, lake, and reedy fen,
While gleamed the hunter's moon with lustre mild.
The lavish splendors of my autumn skies,
My woods and streams, not wholly wasted were:
Beneath my mystic mounds now moulder eyes
And hearts which they to poesy could stir.

Europa.

For thee far back I battled, thought, and sung,—
To make thee mistress of a birthright grand
In thy green wilderness, my trumpets rung
At Marathon, the breeze my banners fanned.

America.

O mother, more than sister,—sister great!
Thy martyrs, heroes, taught to me the lore
Of liberty, for thee shall ne'er abate
My love, my sons ne'er cease to hail thy shore.

Europa.

No diadem thy radiant forehead wears,
All else of power's insignia are thine;
The rods of empire Fate before thee bears
Where'er the sun's descending splendors shine.

America.

Though sad, reluctant, I, indeed, can wield
The pitiless sword with strong and mailèd hand;
But not for conquest grasp I falchion shield,
With amplest bounds, wherein to breathe, expand.
Nor helmet plumed, nor trump's defiant peal
E'er me delighted; never at my feet
Longed I to see the nations vanquished kneel,
But rather knit to me in concord sweet.

My starry 'scutcheon in his taloned grasp
The eagle proudly bears o'er land and sea;
For I was reared in conflict,—despot's clasp
But for my sword had never left me free.

Therefore I used it; but I ever yearned
My warlike panoply to cast aside,

And where the husbandman his furrows turned
Olives of peace to foster far and wide.

Europa.

The conqueror's banner on its staff droops low,
Me glory's glamor can allure no more ;
But still in strife the nations' blood must flow,
And still be heard the deep-mouthed cannon's roar,

Till force barbaric shall to reason yield,
And Truth her sunbright gonfalon upraise
From morn to sunset,—then the embattled field
With fires of carnage will no longer blaze.

America.

Though still unfallen palace, minster stand,
Their gray walls are but relics of the past ;
Some spasm of freedom their proportions grand
Will soon or late in ruins o'er thee cast.

Europa.

It matters not ; for thought's ideals new
Upon my breast will fairer fabrics rear,—
The o'ermastering soul, from which their builders drew
Their plans and art, forever hovers near.

New forms of beauty still it gives to earth,
Leaving its shrines outworn to dull decay ;

From ruin's wreck evolves a fairer birth,
And with fresh vesture doth each age array.

Where are the temples of the Hellene old,
Which on my bosom proudly once I bore?
Their beauty vanished as the centuries rolled,
Or, crushed and fallen, charms the eye no more;

And sun-smit Cross, like Dorian column lone,
Will yet in dust an outworn emblem lie
Through all the lands where ages long it shone,—
Faith's radiant hieroglyph in middle sky.

BLACK CARE.

Post equitem sedet atra cura.—HORACE.

OF yore the cavalier bestriding
His martial steed found Care behind,
His saddle-fellow with him riding,
Though galloped he more fleet than wind.

O'er land or sea, where'er we 're going,
Dark Care, thou art our shadow still;
When bliss our cup is overflowing,
Yet hintest thou of coming ill.

Thou pointest to Death's solemn portal,
Sad terminus of our swift years,
Which background of all vistas mortal
With murky shadows veiled appears.

Thou show'st the cypress darkly waving
Beyond the myrtle, rose, and vine;
With furrows brow of youth art graving;
Thee long can drowse nor sleep nor wine.

Their fumes dispelled, again thou stingest
With sharper pangs the heavy heart.
'Neath ceilings gilt thy flight thou wingest—
'T is wealth most fears thy subtle dart.

For what an hour may bring none knoweth;
From sky serene the bolt may fall;
The best-laid schemes chance overthroweth,
And fate is arbiter of all.

It matters not how solid, fair,
The fabric of our homes we rear,
Still haunts their portals gloomy Care,
And still the lightning's flash we fear.

In sunnier ages long ago
Men's days like streamlets wound along,
No aim austere was pleasure's foe,
But living then was sport and song.

But never more may men revert
To that long gone Arcadian time,
When conscience had no sting to hurt,
And earth was in its sensuous prime.

THE SPIRIT REALM.

Nach jenem stillen, ernsten Geisterreich.—GOETHE.

I.

AFTER long years of life a mystic yearning
Such as the mighty Goethe felt of yore,
Within our heart of hearts at times is burning,
For vanished faces which return no more.

II.

Beyond this being's ceaseless, sad mutations,
In stillness lies the solemn Spirit-land;
There evermore arrive Earth's generations,
And footing find upon a changeless strand.

III.

So deems the heart, and so have deemed the Ages—
To final peace and permanence we 're bound.
This petty mortal life, which frets and rages,
Is by majestic Silence girt around.

THE INEVITABLE END.

AT length we 've done the work of life,
Or failed aught to achieve—
We 've won the prizes of its strife,
Or crownless, palmless grieve.

The time of hope, achievement o'er,
We wait at last the end,
While earth is hillocked more and more
With mounds of foe and friend.

Henceforth the downward path we tread,
Which slopes unto the grave—
For rose and myrtle, soon o'erhead
The cypress dark will wave.

The cloister once and hermit's cell
Declining mortals sought,
And there, while shades of evening fell,
With prayer salvation bought.

Washed from their hands the stains of fight
In solitude's repose,
On bended knees awaited night,
The inevitable close.

Perchance 't was not unwisely done
To fly from vain turmoil—

A little space ere set of sun
To cease from hate and toil.

Contrition, too, might well in tears
Of penitence o'erflow
At retrospect of backward years
With passions fierce aglow.

Save of the soul all voices then
Might well excluded be,
In holy stillness far from men
To face death's mystery.

To higher nature deference 't was,
This final, contrite mood,
To those eternal, inner laws
Of Beauty, Truth, and Good.

ILLUSION.

FAR off the Azure ever lies,
The dreamy Blue, which lures to roam,—
Out there arrived the cheated eyes
The charm behold transferred to home.

Dull fetters are the Here and Now,
Which from us we would rend away ;
The Past, the Future only glow
In Hope and Memory's golden ray.

Our feet thus find, nor pause nor rest—
Alert Illusion keeps them still—
Thus ever towards the fleeing West
Our march we take o'er plain and hill.

Sink cold and dark the shades at length—
To lure us Hope and Fancy cease ;
While calls to halt our waning strength,
Our tents we pitch and are at peace.

WORDS.

Winged words.—HOMER.

ARTICULATED air we yet outlive
Memorial bronze and marble's sculptured brightness ;
To thoughts of sages, bards, we pinions give
And buoy them through the ages with our lightness.

Through gates of sense on airy plumes we glide
Into the unseen spirit's dædal mansion ;
With speed its mystic valves unfolding wide
For our ingress with friendliest expansion.

Along sensation's thoroughfares we run,
Thought's dome our music thrills with sweet vibration,—
Two worlds of matter, spirit, into one
Are knit and married by our mediation.

THE YOUTHFUL DEAD.

They die young, whom the gods love.
OLD GREEK SAYING.

NO process slow of dull decay
The fire of life abated,
With garlands fresh and dewy, they
Its banquet left unsated ;
They vanished in the mists of death,
Ere o'er them fell a shadow—
And now they draw immortal breath
In happy isle or meadow.

More blest than we, who mourned their fate,
These guests, who early hasted,
They lingered not like us too late,
But left the lees untasted,
They quaffed the bubbles on the brim
From beakers full and flowing ;
Our mirth was hushed—our eyes were dim
With tears at their outgoing.

But soon we wiped our tears away—
Again the viol sounding
Bade joy resume its festal sway,
And kept our bosoms bounding,—
Long since the noise of revel died,
Our pulses lost their madness

And in the calm of eventide
We feel the touch of sadness.

From that boon country in the south,
To which they sped before us,
Oft come those long-lost mates of youth
In dreams, and hover o'er us,—
Our locks are gray—our hearts are worn,
Care e'en our sleep invadeth—
They come from bowers of Youth and Morn,
Where leaf nor blossom fadeth.

They come with scents and airs of May,
These guests from vales Elysian—
They shun the din and glare of day
And haunt the nightly vision.
O well for us that Dreamland opes
At times its mystic portal
Through which, rekindling fading hopes,
Glide visitants immortal.

THE DIPPER.

IN eastern skies
Nightly mine eyes
Uplift the seven stars behold ;
With sullen gleam,
Ready they seem
To fall fraught with plagues manifold.

Silent and lone,
Right earthward prone,
With look portentous do they hang—
Ready to smite
With baleful light,
As when the angel's trumpet rang,

And founts and streams
'Neath blasting beams
Of the Star Wormwood shrank away.
I do you wrong,
O shining throng !
No fierce, apocalyptic ray
From your far height
This peaceful night
Ye cast earth's dwellers to dismay.

Still as of old,
In night-skies cold,
Your mystic watch-fires dimly burn
Serving to guide
O'er ocean wide,
Whose wanderers to you nightly turn.

In midnight's hour,
With solemn power,
On all who vigils keep ye shine ;
Your starry spell
No words can tell,
Not e'en the poet's mightiest line.

There far away,
O'er earth's decay
And change, with beams undimmed you roll;
And e'en perchance
Your radiant glance
Will see her shrivelled as a scroll,

While scathless you
Your course pursue,
Dim-twinkling through the vast of space,
A group sublime
Defying time
To quench the splendor of your rays.

THE EARTH AND MAN.

THE theatre in space and scene
Of human struggle grim with fate,
The old earth rolls unchanged, serene,
Since Clio penned her earliest date.

The heaven's azure still roofs o'er
Her rolling orb with blue unworn;
Her oceans heave from shore to shore,
As fresh a surge as in her morn.

Man, whom through space she swiftly buoys
In bright gyration round the sun,
Ideal longing urges on
From change to change; him old truth cloys,

And ever new truth must be won ;
Still Freedom claims him for her son,
And waves her banner bright to lure
Him up to Reason's daylight pure.

From Superstition's orgies wild
And brutal force she weans her child,
With gradual enticement mild :
Her final triumph is secure.

MADRE NATURA.*

THE saints maligned thee, Mother Nature dear,
Blind to thy beauties manifold ;
And yet their New Jerusalems appear
Decked with your verdure, flowers and gold.

'Neath earthlike shade of foliage ever green
Their Paradisal rivers glide—
Earth's lineaments are found in every scene
Apocalyptic John descried.

What world can lovelier apparel show
Than dew-bespangled sward of June,
Than blue of May-time's heaven, with light aglow
Of sun or evening's plenilune?

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* Name of a secret Italian society, one of whose objects was the restoration of its primitive nature worship in Italy.

Thy benediction, mighty mother, steals
On lonely hearts in solitude ;
Thy peace, that passeth knowledge, gently heals
The unkindest blows of fortune rude.

Thine azure distances forever fair,
With magical allurement woo—
Ideal worlds suggest, aloof from care,
Far in thy heaven's empyreal blue.

Thy punctual morn, with far-hurled beams of light
From dreamland rouses consciousness,
And through the starry dark the dews of night
With brief oblivion mortals bless.

From thee the mystic heart and spirit sprung
Of wondrous man by slow degrees.
Him gavest thou his swift, articulate tongue,
To music turning all he sees.

The sense of beauty, truth, and justice thou
Didst in his spirit's texture weave,
And, crowned with reason-beaming eye and brow,
Didst column-like his form upheave.

In fallen Eleusis worshipped thee of yore
Primeval man with honors due.
A stole besprent with stars your image wore ;
Your tresses were of wheaten hue.

MORGENROTH.

MORNING'S red, as fresh as ever,
Fresh as when my life begun,
Glowing in the orient heaven,
Greets with roses rising sun.
Morning's red—old mythic ages
Deemed it Palace of the Dawn—
Whence the ever-blooming Eos
Sowed with pearls each mountain lawn;
Where in secret chamber hidden
Old Tithonus, age-worn, lay,
While the Dawn her coursers urging,
Ushered in the new-born day,
Rosy hours about her circling,
As the misty earth below—
Ocean, city, mountain, meadow—
Kindled in the morning's glow.

ABENDROTH.

MY skyey garden nightly blossoms fair
With star-flowers tremulous and bright—
It is a field of dewy, sunset air,
Where riseth Hesperus to sight.
I from my western window duly gaze,
As sundown's splendor ebbs away,

And see its mystic parterres bloom and blaze
With night flowers knowing not decay.

Into my silent, lonely, darkling room
From azure spaces far they gleam,
With their unwithering petals a perfume
Of heaven dispensing as they beam;
Thicker and thicker on that field dark-blue
They into fulgent blossoms break and shine
In clusters sweet and mystical, which woo
The vision with a charm divine.

O radiant Gulistan of sunset air,
My skyey garden in the West,
Each night I see thee blooming brightly there,
Where evening's red doth heaven invest;
I, thitherward intently gazing, seem,
While softly whispers twilight's breeze,
To see the Grecian poet's myth and dream,
The Garden of the Hesperides.

LONG AGO.

BRIGHTER shone the summer sunshine
Of the Junes of long ago,
And with deeper crimson damasked
Did the foretime's roses blow—
Spread a fresher, dewier greensward
Verdure of the years gone by—
Hummed the bee a drowsier murmur—
Soared aloft a bluer sky.

Sang the poets sweeter measures
Than the Present's minstrels know,
Loftier, in the azure distance,
Towered the mountains long ago;
Hearts were warmer, lips more kindly
In the days that are no more;
Life, indeed, was worth the living
In that jocund time of yore,

Summer eves were softer, sweeter,
Night sky had a starrier glow,
Brighter over bards and lovers
Shone the moons of long ago;
Raved the autumn wind more wildly,
Whirling sere leaves to and fro;
Roof and pane more fiercely beating,
Fell the rains of long ago.

As in space, in time the distant
Wears an azure, golden glow;
Thus, as farther off we leave it,
Fairer seems the long ago.
Memory conjures vanished faces
From the dust where lie they low—
As the years fly faster o'er us,
Brighter shines the long ago.

All its sorrows are forgotten,
As far rough crags azure show—
Dwells the world-worn heart with yearning
On the things of long ago;

Like some strand of Faerie gleaming
On the storm-tossed voyager's eye,
More and more the heart alluring,
Lie they there—the days gone by.

THE PAST.

INTO the moonlight of the Past,
To silence deep subsiding,
The Present with its uproar loud,
Forevermore is gliding;
There, backward drifting more and more,
Its men and things grow dimmer,
Till what was once as sunshine clear
Fades to a twilight glimmer.

Thus time that is to time that was
With noiseless lapse is changing,
And we that live, to shadows turned,
Will ghost-land soon be ranging;
As ranged of yore the phantoms thin,
The lifeworn, spent and weary,
The throngs unnumbered of the dead
Through Homer's Hades dreary.

The hours are brief while overhead
The sun for us is shining;
Then wherefore brood upon the Past,
For dead and gone repining?

We shall not fail its phantoms pale
To join at last forever—
At last to know the languid flow
Of Lethe's fabled river.

When we are gone the years will still
Be coming and be going,
The decades into centuries swell,
No pause nor respite knowing,
New eras take the place of old,
Old things be wholly rotten,
E'en this our current century then
Long lapsed will be forgotten.

Its modes, beliefs, and arts be strange
To those far future ages,
As modes which History's sire records
Upon his hoary pages.
For on thought's threshold still we stand,
Brute instincts low obeying ;
But Mind and Reason pure will yet
Some future grand be swaying.

THE LONELY MIRROR.

I.

FROM beauty now nor glance nor smile
My dusty surface winneth ;
Its filmy web across my face,
Unbrushed, the spider spinneth.
A lonely mirror, here I hang,
With nothing for reflection ;

Though of Venetian glass, I wear
An aspect of dejection.

II.

Ah me! the charms of long ago,
I imaged back so brightly!
In dusty crypts they moulder low,
All noisome and unsightly.
The eyes like stars, the locks like gold,
Which once in me were gleaming—
Ah! might I such again behold
As then before me beaming!

III.

For I, a festal mirror, was
Gay, joyous groups reflecting—
Bright eyes into my lucid depths
Their glances were directing.
Before me, in their witching bloom,
With wealth of beauty laden
And wealth of tresses, often stood
Full many a lovely maiden—

IV.

Sometimes at morn, *en dishabille*,
While dreams still round them hover;
Sometimes at eve, with charms arrayed
For party, dance, or lover.
But than their images in me
They proved not more enduring;

Their beauty was a fading flower
As brief as 't was alluring.

v.

A lone, forsaken, old-time room
I now am sadly glassing—
No lightsome footsteps in and out,
As long ago, are passing.
The old house is accursed, they say,
By restless spectre haunted.
Why flits it not before my disk?
Me it would find undaunted.

VI.

I image back the creaking boughs,
When autumn winds are blowing;
Their shadows all day long in me
Are to and fro a-going.
And when the moon is up, they wave
In ghastly oscillation—
E'en at the stir of trees I feel
A sort of exultation.

THE HUNTER'S MOON.

THE hunter's moon, the hunter's moon,
A silver isle in dark blue skies,
With not a cloud to dim its sheen
Its spell to-night is on all eyes.

On mountain summits, cold and bare,
On forests, lakes, and devious streams ;
On cities, towns, and farmsteads lone
She sheds all night her wizard beams.

Though summer's foliage fallen lies
Wind-piled in heaps o'er all the land,
This mild November eve is like
A May night with its south wind bland.

A spell is on the earth and air
Moon-wove, which makes us feel and know,
Why 'neath her orb in homage knelt
The fore-world's tribes of long ago !

MORNING.

AH, how pleasant is the morning,
With its sunshine on the wall ;
Broad awake the soul no longer
Phantoms of the night appall.
Earth from spell of starlight breaking
Cheerful daylight life renews,
While on flowers and grass-blades glisten,
Gladdening vision, pearl-like dews.

AUTUMNALS.

I.

THISTLEDOWN.

WAIF of August afternoon,
Tiny gossamer balloon,
Elfin pinnace drifting fair
Through seas of soft and sunny air—
When thou art launched, the summer sun
His glowing task will soon have done ;
Almost ripe the tasselled corn,
While the cricket sings forlorn,
Evening hath a breath more cool,
Dead leaves drop in lowland pool.
Soon the harvest moon will shine
With a splendor as divine,
With as tremulous a glow
As bedewed Endymion's brow,
Gleaming over wood and wave,
As she gleamed in Latmian cave.
With thy silken tackle trim
And fitful buoyance, thou dost swim
Leisurely, a vagrant sail
Through this lovely, upland vale,
Mountain-shadowed with a spell
Of witchery no words can tell,
Whence o'er yon ridge's giant spine

'T is sweet to watch young Hesper shine.
Thy noiseless, graceful flight I see,
O Thistledown, regretfully,
For with the northing of the sun
The sweet, do-nothing days are done.

II.

THE AUGUST CRICKET.

In the latter days of summer,
When the thistledown is flying,
An incessant, lonesome murmur
From the withering fields and hedges,
Through the long, long day arises,
In the twilight waxing stronger,
Till when moon and stars are beaming,
In the stilly midnight watches,
On the wakeful ear it pulses
Lonesome, desolate, and dreary,
As if earth her bloom had ended
And the people all were dreaming
From their couches ne'er to waken,
But at length to moulder wholly
Into ashes, dust, and darkness.
'T is the herald of the autumn ;
'T is the Yankee cicad's murmur ;
'T is the August cricket singing
Dirges o'er the waning summer,
While the sobered, fading landscape
Quivers with his tireless accent.

III.

FALL.

The grain of Sarra soon will be
On every hedge and every tree ;
From autumn's beaker wine will flow
Of richer tint and purpler glow
Than southmost vintages can show,
Aërial, lucent, welling clear
From sun vats of the ripened year ;
Wine, essence of all glorious things,
Gushing from morn and sunset's springs,
Blue skies and autumn's bracing airs ;
From apples, peaches, plums, and pears,
From rustling fields of golden maize,
From rich October's gorgeous days ;
Wine with aromā manifold,
Such as cheered the age of gold,
The cool, bright hydromel of fall
In azure tun ethereal
Fermented, which the weary brain
Maketh to glow with thought again—
Driving all moodiness away—
Freshening its convolutions gray—
Filling with breezy rapture all
The dome of thought, its dædal hall
And subtle labyrinths, more fine
Than Cretan artist could design.
Queen Fall ! thou colorist superb,
Turning to gold each humblest herb ;
Here, far from equatorial heat,

The skies of palm lands thou dost beat,
Pavilioning with deeper blue
Our crags than Grecian Isles e'er knew.

* * * * * *

His gun the hunter will forget,
As dries the wind his forehead wet,
While from some breezy, mapled knoll
He sees the fairy earth unroll
Its misty, iridescent gold
Of yellowing bowers and ripened grain,
Which clothe each far-stretched vale and plain
With gleaming rivers winding through,
And far Sierras faint and blue.

TRAVELLER AND DESERTED HOUSE.

Traveller.

OLD House, on this upland standing,
Through thy portals I would fain
Find a shelter and a refuge
From the wind and flooding rain.
'T is the equinoctial tempest
Strewing earth with withered leaves,
Fierce it beats against thy gray front,
Pours in torrents from thine eaves.

Old House.

I am lonely and deserted—
'T was not thus in other days ;

Ever on my warm hearth burning
Flashed a hospitable blaze.
Now through empty hall and chamber
Raves the storm-wind wild and free;
Ghosts of vanished generations
In the dim night haunting me.

Traveller.

I will wrap me in my blanket,
On thy floor my tired limbs cast,
List the pelting of the rain-drops,
List the wailing of the blast.
Tell me, Old House, of thy dwellers
In the pleasant years long flown,
When of human joy and sorrow
Here the accents still were known.

Old House.

Of a race of sturdy yeomen
He was sire, my walls who reared;
Battling with primeval forest,
Here a homestead fair he cleared.
Sire and sons with nature wrestling,
Year by year incessant toiled,
Till subdued to human uses
All the stern land bloomed and smiled.

Rustled maize-fields, blossomed clover,
Murmurous with hum of bees;
Waved aloft o'er roof and well-sweep
Great elms in the summer breeze;

Fluted orioles, sang the robins
In the orchard eve-notes sweet ;
Sealike heaved luxurious grasses
And the billowing fields of wheat.

From my greensward, cool and pleasant,
Saw the gazer far away,
Azure bulks of distant mountains
Towering in the sunset's ray.
Lakes in depths of woods secluded,
Where the loon, shy recluse, dwells,
Saw he and the gleam of hid streams
Winding through the quiet dells.

Here in wake of Thrift and Labor,
Genius, beauty often sprung ;
Mind athirst for utmost knowledge,
Soul of poet, suasive tongue.
Thus at times a youth descended
From my threshold to the plain.
To the stir of lowland city,
Station, honor sure to gain.

Once a poet 'neath my roof-tree
In the days gone by was born,
Fed his spirit stream and forest,
Sun and starlight, night and morn.
Loved he in his dreamy boyhood
'Neath my rafters strong to lie,
When as now the autumn tempest
Raved and moaned in earth and sky.

Witchery of maiden beauty
Here once wove its subtle spell,
Drew enamoured youths unto me,
As the twilight round me fell.
'Neath the summer moon how often
Whispered youths and maidens here,
As the gold of sunset faded
And the eve-star sparkled clear!

Here, too, death the threshold darkened,
Hushed me to a silence drear,
Made to hearts bereaved and broken
Earth a wilderness appear.
But the cruel laceration
Time by slow degrees healed o'er,
Sanctified the loved and lost ones
To the mourners evermore.

Traveller.

Why thus voiceless and deserted,
As the seasons glide away,
Leave thy sons their natal mansion
To the tooth of slow decay?

Old House.

Long as breathed my whilom dwellers
To the manor born I drew,
Like a star them annual hither
Youth and childhood to renew.
They are gone, and me their children,
Housed in fairer homes, disdain;

Thus my empty chambers left are
Open to the wind and rain,—
Richer soils and softer climates
Drew my tillers one by one—
Thus the mullein and the thistle
All my precincts overrun.

Traveller.

By the great lakes and the prairies
And Pacific's thunderous tide,
Old House on New England's uplands,
Are thy dwellers scattered wide.
Younger states of ampler compass
Them as founders, leaders own,
Fresh New Englands multiplying
In each latitude and zone.

In these eastern homes deserted,
Europe's outcasts dull may creep ;
Or as now the night and tempest
Their loud carnival may keep ;
Still her sacred soil remaineth
Freedom hallowed evermore,
Whatsoever creed or language
Migrates to New England's shore.

Still her Champion Gray * his vigil
O'er her fields and cities keeps,

* See in Hawthorne's "Twice-Told Tales" the story of the Gray Champion.

And in hours of war and peril
To the front of battle leaps ;
Leads her sons to certain triumph,
As he led their sires of old
When before his shadowy menace
Back the cowed invaders rolled.

CATHEDRALS.

SHELLS of a dwindling faith, they stand,
Slow-mouldering, o'er many a land.
The ritualist would fain restore
These *holies* of the days of yore ;
Their Gothic arches fondly prop ;
Their slow dilapidation stop.
Gigantic symbols once they stood
Of a long-current human mood.
That mood is past, and reason now
Forbids to grovel man's broad brow
In blind and servile homage low.
The lightning flash of modern thought
The gods they shrined to grief has brought.
They, mistlike, gradual fade away,
Smit through and through by reason's ray.
As ruin levelled long ago,
Olympia's and Delphi's shrine,
Which nobler genius did design,
So Peter's dome at last will strow
With splendors wrecked the earth below.

THE DEAD PAST.

O PEDANT dull, who with thy bucket fain
Wouldst living water from the dead past draw,
The dead were wise for their own day ; in vain
Of a new time you make their lore the law ;
Art not alive thyself with soul to know
And more of truth than men had long ago ?
Not with the eyes wherewith dead nations saw
The world look thou, but thine own vision use ;
Nature herself forevermore renews,
And comelier generations brings to light ;
With swift despatch her crude assays from sight
Hiding, wholly intent upon the breathing Now ;
Not stumbling with reverted glance move thou,
But forward, kindling at the Future's glow.

THE TASK OF CIVILIZATION.

O CIVILIZATION, what is now thy task ?
E'en this, to re-create the multitude,
From animalism low to lift the throng
Of men up to the lofty *human* plane,
Whereon the sense of beauty, justice, truth,
Beholds in prospect fair the ideal world
And weans from brutish instincts of the flesh.

Thus lifted to its glorious birthright high
The mob shall cast its grimy slough away,
The low-browed countenance shall flash with gleams
Of rational consciousness, and bestial appetite
And base desire be tamed. The Demagogue
No more shall with his sophistries mislead
The vulgar mind, the Plutocrat no more
Pervert to his enrichment, selfishness,
The popular strength ; the Priest no longer fill
His coffers with superstition's offerings
For absolution and indulgences
And passports to pretended bliss. O Day
Of liberation of the multitude
From thraldom to the past, arise and shine
O'er all the sorrow-stricken fields of earth,
And be the herald of a just society,
Wherein man shall not prey on man, but all
Co-operate to noble, generous ends !
And lies the route to such millennial state
Of general justice, plenty, happiness,
Through Nihilistic hate and Dynamite
And violent erasure of all the past ?
No : by degrees and through the gradual lapse
Of meliorating years shall justice come,
And on this earth at length be realized
The bright Atlantis of the sage's dreams,
The City of God, whereof Augustine wrote.

THE DEAD BARD.*

JUNE 12, 1878.

THE New World's minstrel, hoary-bearded, old,
At length unto the burden of his years
Succumbs, and lies majestic, seerlike, cold,
Joining the bards of other days, his peers.
No more the footsteps of the throng untold,
Beating the city's ways like rain, he hears;
Though still 't is in its wonted current rolled
There, where he sleeps, past his insentient ears.—
He sang the Rivulet that down its glen
Still bickering runs; the Prairie pastures vast
And shy stream gliding far from haunts of men;
The Hymn of Death and the remorseless Past,
And Waterfowl that towards its distant fen,
Lone flying through the sunset, 'scaped his ken;
The Hunter dreaming on the mountain's brow;
The solemn, sylvan past, in accents grand,—
All these he sang; and Liberty in guise
Of beauteous matron, young, with flashing eyes
Confronting Tyranny and vanished Youth,
Which waits us where immortal morn prevails;
And, stronger from defeat, Eternal Truth,
Before whom stricken Error dying quails.

* William Cullen Bryant.

IN MEMORIAM.

(EMERSON.)

MAY, pensive o'er her minstrel dead,
Unsheathes not yet her wonted bloom,
But sadly droops with wreathless head
Above his freshly mounded tomb.

Zephyr nor south wind breathes as yet,
But March-like gusts rave here and there.
Grieved Nature voices her regret
In troubled earth and sea and air.

For who in this new world like him
The mighty mother's moods has sung?
Mountain and shore and forest dim
Found in his mystic verse a tongue.

Therefore, her lost interpreter
Mute Nature mourns with rainy skies,
While fitfully the wild winds stir
The air to elegiac sighs.

Pan on the lonely mountains tunes
His reeds to grief; and by the lonely shore,
In twilight of its foliage, croons
A dirge the pine tree evermore.

The blue bird from the palmy isles
He loved to greet flies songless back ;
And raucous geese, in wedge-like files,
Wing silently their skyey track.

At length, drying her tears, sweet May
Will blossom into leafy June ;
The south wind make the meadows gay,
And wild bees hum a breezy tune ;

The frogs in twilight marshes sing
With bibulous notes their old refrain ;
The swallow glance on glittering wing,
And light and bloom glad earth again.

But, ah ! to Nature's round once more
Of sights and sounds he sung so well,
What potence is there can restore
Her bard, what death-reversing spell ?

To winding Concord's pleasant vale
Through all the countless future years,
Hadjis devout will never fail,
Though naught above his grave appears

But flowery sward and simple stone,
Such as a sage's rest beseem,
Asleep amid the pine woods lone,
Beneath whose boughs he loved to dream.

There still the Evening Star will shine
With beams as bright as lured his youth

The city's tumult to resign
For high and holy quest of truth.

Onward his Indian stream will run
Through pensive plain and meadow green,
But not in all the years will one
Like him upon its marge be seen.

Beside him brother Druids lie,
His comrades ere repose they found :
'T is well that 'neath familiar sky
All slumber in familiar ground.

THOREAU.

BY the quiet river lay his bones,
Where forever the low tones
Of reed and wave
Can murmur near his grave.
These were the sounds he loved in life,
And not the din and strife
Of market-place and street.
The leafy solitude
Of silent wood
Was dear unto his feet.

The language of the birds he knew,
And every plant that grew ;
The lonely pond, the crystal mere
With pines environed, far from human tread,

Where dives the loon with nought to fear,
And, Nile-like, by some hidden fountain fed—
On these he loved to float
His drifting boat
Between two heavens suspended
In azure splendid.

Poised below,
Where his idle pinnace swung,
The mute fishes hung,
Or darted to and fro,
Seeming to the eye
Dwellers of an inverted sky.
The world out of doors
Was his home,
His roof the skyey dome,
The fallen leaves the carpets of his floors.

In the pine tree's shade,
Far from tower and town,
His sylvan lodge he made
Beneath the forest's shadow brown.
There from his leafy cloister damp
Twinkled at midnight his lonely lamp,
While the frog piped from the neighboring swamp ;
Amid the sylvan silence round,
Lulled by the soothing sound
Of the pine, would he muse and dream
In statue-like abstraction and repose,
From summer-dawn till the day's close.

He was a Quietist of the woods
And green New England solitudes,
And in his eye
Burned the red light of many a sunset sky.
Each stilly Sabbath morn,
Over the tremulous tree-tops borne
From all the horizon round,
A subdued, clangorous sound,
A far-off music sweet
Into his lone retreat
The village bells would send,
Unto his solitude a charm to lend.

In spring-time, on their way
To Baffin's Bay,
And the Arctic shore
Of Labrador,
Many a caravan
Of geese, ceasing the misty air to fan,
In his lakelet would alight
On weary wings, against to-morrow's flight.
The wood-bird pecked beside his door,
And the squirrel underneath his floor
Chattered fearless. All night in fitful downpour
From the relenting sky
Would he hear the May rain prophesy
Of bursting buds and flowers,
And greenest June's delicious hours.
Close to Nature's breast
He lived. The mighty Mother him caressed
As her darling son,

Whose life with hers was still in unison ;
Her deepest pulses throbbing clear
Unto his lonely ear.

No untamed thing in Nature's fold,
That burrows in the mould,
Or creeps, or swims, or flies,
Shunning human sight,
Could elude his piercing eyes
From the trout's haunt, dim and shy,
To the sea-fowl's airiest flight,
Over the city steeple's dizziest vane
Specking the dim inane.

But Nature's worshipper has passed
From the river, mead, and waste,
Into the spiritual clime
That knows not space and time ;
The eternal Cosmos, where
Change and generation are unknown,
And want and care,
And grief and moan.

But still the woods and quiet stream
On which he loved to dream
Will whisper of their Druid flown,
Their lost companion,
Whose skilful ear
Aright their oracles could hear,
So that the oak and pine
Could sing and murmur in his line

Truths more high
Than those erst borne on old Dodona's leafy sigh.

Let the Concord murmur near
Unto his mouldering ear,
Or by Walden's diamond deep
Perchance he would more softly sleep,
Lulled by the trees he loved and knew,
His grave-sods steeped with twilight's dew.
There let him sleep within the eye
Of his loved mount, Wachusett, blue :
The sunset's citadel,
Rising with airy swell
On the threshold of the west,
As though beyond—not far away—
Some occidental land of rest,
Or gleaming island of the blest,
In sweet seclusion lay.

THE STAR OF THE LION.

THE stars of twilight, one by one,
Come out above the sunken sun,
At first with faint and timid beams
Amid the daylight's fading gleams.
Anon, as sunset's splendors die,
Distinct they lure the pensive eye,
And gem the dusking western sky.

With face turned sunward, body spread
O'er half the azure fields o'erhead,
The constellated Lion grim
See couchant in those star-depths dim.
And, lo ! his chiefest orb to-night,
Basilikos,* flames clear and bright.

Mark well that lamp of summer even,—
Star more renowned illumes not heaven.
In history's primeval days,
Ere David, Job, or Homer sung,
Ere Rome 'mid woods of Latium sprung,
It drew the Babylonian's gaze
For signs of fate when scanning space.

Chaldæan sages watched the glow
Of Regulus thus long ago ;
Thus far, 'mid mists of backward time,
Observed it from their towers sublime.
'T was Regulus, the kingly star
Which ruled Chaldæa's calendar,
And Greek Hipparchos taught aright
The movement of the hosts of night.
Here, through our New World's twilight gray,
It beams with undiminished ray,
On us as brightly shining down
As on Assyrian monarch's crown.

* The principal star in the constellation of the Lion was called Basilikos, or the Little King, by the Greek astronomers. It is known to modern astronomers as Regulus, which is a Latin word of the same significance. The Arabs, too, called it the Royal Star.

And when our lips have long been dumb,
And a far future shall have come,
And dull oblivion made its prey
The fames and grandeurs of to-day,
And all now breathing melted be
In bosom of eternity,
The Lion's regal star will shed
Its radiance still through evening's red,
And still shine on with changeless ray
O'er earth's mutations and decay,
And bring as now to sleepless eyes
The peace of its far tranquil skies.

SONNET.

THE devotees of thought are lonely men,
Unheeded by the world they dwell apart ;
Unnoticed in the great Batavian mart
Descartes abode as in some mountain glen.
When respite from his quest of Truth he sought
He roamed the busy streets with curious eyes,
Snuffing the scent of Orient merchandise
And spicy drugs from Indian islands brought.
And Gibbon sat in studious solitude,
Sinking bright shafts into the foretime's gloom,
While within earshot of his silent room
Bickered the chariot wheels of Fashion's brood.
Immortal air their inner lives respired,
In tranquil breathings from the world retired.

TO BENEDICT SPINOZA.

O PURE as Christ, as deeply souled !
Whose life, an alder-shaded stream,
Hid from the broad day's garish beam,
In hush of thought unmurmuring rolled :

Thou outcast of an outcast race !
From loyalty to truth no lure
Thy step could turn,—its path obscure
Content with even tread to pace.

With surer foot who could have scaled
The vulgar heights ? Conformist—thee
With loud acclaim and jubilee
Rabbles and rabbins would have hailed !

With tardy recognition now
Memorial honors thee await—
There, where on earth thine humble fate
Thou didst accept with placid brow.

KANT.

FAR up in granite altitudes cloud-hung
Of mountain loneliness, the source we spy
Of continent-furrowing rivers grand, whereby
Earth's chiefest capitals have proudly sprung.
'T is from some murmurous cavern near the sky
The lowland champaign draws fertility:
So to thy lofty brain, O thinker high!
The thousand rills of thought, ideal streams,
Which to the common level of thy race
Bring rich alluvium of truth, we trace.
You found within, where sovereign Reason beams,
The primal, universal verities
Unmixed with sensual alloy. Your eyes
Were purged by a most spiritual euphrasy.

HAPPY HUNTING-GROUNDS.

O'ER paradisal prairies, lakes, and streams,
Through woods, which wintry winds are never scourging,
Lo, the poor Indian, so he fondly dreams,
Beyond the grave a shadowy chase is urging.

Visions of happy hunting-grounds have been
The solace of the ages hitherto—
Of yore, westward for his immortal scene
Of bliss the Grecian hero's spirit flew,

Beyond the pillars of Alcmena's son,*
Far o'er the outer ocean, where the day,
When his precipitous course, at length, was done,
The Happy Isles suffused with level ray.

There blew the west wind, with eternal breath.
That never swelled to storm or wintry gale;
There dwelt the heroic few, who knew not death,
In summer meads, where fell not rain nor hail.

A city of God, with golden portals bright,
Next gladdened long the raptured eye of faith;
Like clouds aglow in sunset's gorgeous light,
Upreared its walls, the glorious heavenly wraith.

Then through the new world's odorous forest gloom,
Long knightly seekers roamed of Eldorado,
Till, worn with baffled quest, a lonely doom
O'ertook them in the wildwood's boundless shadow.

Perchance their dying ears the murmurs heard
Of fount of youth, beside them softly flowing;
Perchance their filming eyes the illusion stirred
Of gilded turrets, through the dim boughs glowing.

In mystic solitudes of sunset sea
No voyager strains for happy isles his vision—
Through justice, knowledge, common earth may be
At length transformed into a field Elysian.

* Hercules, or Herakles.

HOLY LAND.

WHERE is the Holy Land? Not where
The wrecks of vanished priesthoods lie,
Fallen fanes beneath the lonely sky,
Round which of old the battle cry
Of warring zealots rent the air :
The Santa Terra is not there.

It rears aloft no haughty dome,
Of God the so-called special home,
Beneath which low-browed peasants kneel
And voices of *castrati* peal.
'T is where the light of knowledge comes
E'en to the lowliest, humblest homes ;
'T is where the people own the soil,
The acreage on which they toil,
Gathering beneath their granges' eaves
The annual harvest's golden sheaves,
Untithed by haughty priest or lord,—
For freemen's use, enrichment stored.

It is no stricken waste of sand,
Of crumbling rocks and outworn earth,
Where wild enthusiasts had birth :
Such natals once made Holy Land.
Now, where truth's light and reason's ray
Shed cloudless intellectual day,
Where knowledge with anointment grand
Makes all men kings,—there 's Holy Land.

THE POET'S LAND.

Zu dem Dichterlande.—SCHILLER.

THERE clustered in immortal groups are seen
The sacred singers of each age and clime
With temples laurelled with perennial green,
The meed of nations for their lays sublime.
And all are brothers, whatsoe'er the tongue
Each may to poesy etern have wrought,—
Whether their lyres in far-off foretimes rung
Or voiced of eras just elapsed the thought.

From sightless Homer e'en to Shelley, all
The impulse of a chainless spirit own,
Save here and there some sensuous, recreant thrall
Of low desire, who hymned a despot's throne.
Though sang he 'neath Olympian heaven low
In years which yield not an historic ray,
The blind old Scian minstrel yet could know
That slavery taketh half man's worth away.

SONNET.

SHUTS out the depths of cosmic space the day,
Our puny earth to prominence restoring.
Refreshed and reassured by morning's ray
Through wonted channels life again is roaring.

No wonder men the sun were once adoring :
In his glad light, we somewhat seem again.
Cities and hamlets largely loom once more,
The air throbs with their turmoil and uproar,
From morn till evening human interests reign.
Earth into shadow then again retires,
Abashed and hushed beneath the starry fires,
Cyclads of limitless space. The Milky Way
In mystic stillness gleams o'erhead, where, blent,
The beams of myriad suns kindle the firmament.

LAND, LIGHT, WATER, AIR.

THUS far Natura Rerum has been foiled,
And made a partial foster-mother hard.
Whereas for all was meant her kind regard,
The few have won it, while the many toiled,
And on an acreage they owned not moiled.
Light, water, air, could not be fenced, but vain
Are these to him who footing cannot gain
Upon the bosom of his mother earth,
Whither at last all go, whence all have birth.
To be a man is a distinction high,
A title to the soil as well as air.
'T will be for Reason, Science, to take care
This title is made good, that usury
And fraud and force no longer breed despair.

TRUTH.

COYLY, with gradual apocalypse,
Truth for the Multitude her veil withdraws,
Dispelling Superstition's dire eclipse
And spectral gloom slowly, with many a pause
While she unmuffles. Well the goddess knows
Her full effulgence would their vision daze,
Purblind and used to Error's darkness gross,
Or mythic Fancy's glimmering, twilight rays.
But unto spirits elect in every time
Has she her sun-bright form and features shown
Without disguise, as rapt in thought sublime
In cloistered silence sat they musing, lone.
With sudden step then on them would she steal,
Full-orbed her countenance august reveal.

THIS WORLD.

WE hope, aspire, and dream, but only know
The current life we now are living here,
So sweet to most they ask no higher sphere.
Art, science, freedom, peace, can make to glow,
Like fabled heaven, this world, which long ago
Was deemed a place of harsh probation drear;
Only a vestibule where, pale with fear,
Men should salvation seek by penance grim.
Foully this glorious world the saints belied:

'T is one of the innumerous orbs that swim
Through cosmic space on gravitation's tide ;
With beauty as a garment clothed, it spins
About the sun, buoyant, in orbit wide,
Nor rays one beam the less because of human sins.

NATURE.

EACH fleeting generation formulates
A theory of me, then goes its way ;
But I, the mute and always-living, stay.
The strong, bright present tense me ever dates,
While hampers man to-morrow, yesterday,
Cheated by hope and memory's idle play.
The god-creators he erst throned o'er me
A wider vision has dispelled, as dreams ;
A watch-like mechanism no more he deems
The living All, a mere contrivance wrought
By puny cosmoplast once on a time
To be to ignominious ruin brought.
At last his soul invades the truth sublime
Of an eternal Now, a dateless might,
A surge ineffable of life and light.

THE EQUINOX.

THE sorrow of the Autumn rain is here,
But Summer's foliaceous locks hang high,—
Not soiled gold yet in woodpaths lone they lie,
Though 'mong them many a leaf is stricken sere.

An Indian swarthiness bronzes the year,
Such as the ancient sylvan continent wore
Far back in immemorial days of yore,
Making the savage past to reappear
Forever in our New-World bounds, as oft
As Autumn comes with rustling Indian ear,
And breezes from the southwest breathing soft,
And blue-skied noons, ethereal, sunny, bland,
And eves, apocalyptic visions grand,
With mystic sunset gleams of woods and waters
clear.

THE HUMAN COUNTENANCE.

(WILKINSON VERSIFIED.)

THE human face is wardrobe of the soul,
Its scenic boudoir, robing-room most fair,
Affording dresses, liveries manifold,
Costumes of every dye and cut are there.
It is the loom, wherein the inner man
Can instant weave the garment of his mood ;
Where all the hopes, desires, and passions can
Wear uniforms with fitting hues imbued :
Our Seven Ages there their liveries find,
From nursery cradle ranging to the bier,—
Youth's roseate, downy bloom of joy combined
With sunny dimples, sparkling glances clear ;
Furrow and line for many-thoughted age ;
Carnation for the bridal morning sweet ;

Love's heavenly blush ; the blackening hue of rage,
And green of jealousy,—all there you meet ;
Hate's wicked white ; despair's own death-like gray ;
There takes hypocrisy all robes and dyes,
Plundering the rest by turns of their array,
Wherein to hoodwink surface-cheated eyes ;
Sorrow and penitence have sackcloth there ;
And Genius in high, rapturous mood divine,
Self-luminous the halo bright doth wear,
Which wont of old round gods and saints to shine.

THE PAST.

THERE it lies in shadow,—the outworn Past :
No more it sways the Present from the urns
And charnels of its historied dead, no more
Repeat its creeds and consecrated myths
The generations of to-day with servile,
Parrot-like, unquestioning iteration.
Men's ancestors, forefathers, are no more
As household deities adored ; no more
Their customs, usages, are sacrosanct.
The hearthfire's gods, Penatès, Larès, are
At length dethroned. Reason is paramount.

To sunlike beams and breezes fresh of Truth
Men's minds, like vernal lawns, lie open wide.

The foul breath of the Past no more will breathe
The generations of to-day. Each age will soon
Construct its own environment, its shrines,
Abodes to suit its current mood, refusing
To be housed in structures long ago upreared,
Unventilated, dark with stains of blood.
The palaces of kings, the monstrous shrines
Of hierarchies old, which Europe's soil
Incumber, will ere long in ruinous heaps
Be strown, because they symbolize the Past,
Its tyrannies and superstitions foul.

Happy art thou, America, because
Thine unpolluted acreage, where bloom
The virgin blossoms of the wilderness,
The sealike prairies' golden flowerage,
Ne'er groaned beneath the architecture huge
Of priests and kings, upreared with tears and sighs
By drudges guerdonless, that loathed their toil.
The forms putrescent of the dead will soon
To earth and air by purifying flames
Be given, no longer life empoisoning
With fetid exhalations of decay.
Thus in the living Now will life be lived,
With Reason like the Morning Star aloft,
The torch to more and more enlightenment,
To final justice, that shall lift from slough
Of want and woe all wearing human shape.

TRUTH.

O TRUTH, a form of virgin loveliness
Fitly might thee incarnate, even such
As old Athenai's Maid of Wisdom wore.

Her eyes of deep celestial blue might well
Be thine, but not her Gorgon shield and helm.
The panoply thou wear'st is light alone,
Wherewith thou deal'st immedicable wounds,
Through Error's buckler driving shaft on shaft,—
Ethereal archery no mail can fend.

Like dawn thou com'st dispersing gloom ;
About thy radiant feet, the harbingers
Of day, cower gods and demons old, the brood
Of night shrinking in terror from thy face,
By conflict flushed to loveliness austere.

They veiled and templed thee of yore, but thou
The function, name, of deity dost shun,
Deaf unto selfish prayer and bended knee.
Thy priesthood are the sons of knowledge, light,
Who ever served thee 'neath the blue of heaven,
Leaving to Sacerdocies dark altars
And frankincense and prayers and gilded shrines.

Eternal Verity, thee reason knew
In its ideal realm ; thee knew and loved,

And made thee linger in seclusion long,
Not hastening thy descent where passion raved,
And force barbaric swayed the tribes of men,
With superstition for its dark ally.

At length with joy thine Avatar we see ;
The few alone no longer thee behold
In bright, ideal elevation throned,
Beyond the ken of the low-thoughted throng.
Thy shining sandals flash along the ways
Of common life in field and market-place.

Thou draw'st the servile multitude away
From mouldering shrines, worm-eaten symbols old,
And slavish attitudes of adoration,
To gaze erect with lifted front upon
Thy charms, that win with purest loveliness
Of roseate cheek and azure eye and brow serene,
Not crowned, but wreath'd with many an auburn tress.

Beauty and Justice are thy sisters bright ;
And Grace and Muse will minister to thee
With lither motions, sweeter melodies,
Than fabling Error ever could command.

Thou giv'st to sage and bard not petty span
Of this small orb for inspiration, but
Immeasurable space and time wherein
Eternal might works ever without haste
Or rest, hanging with worlds like wreaths of flowers

Unnumbered firmaments, whereof Urania,
The mythic, olden queen of astral lore,
In her most rapt and loftiest mood ne'er dreamed.

Long-time illusions reign by thy sufferance.
At last thou turn'st a bright iconoclast,
Rousing the mind from torpor and content,
To put away its crumbling idols foul.
Then springs enraged Reaction to the rescue,
Taunting thee with vile epithets, till thine eye
Emits a flash that slays without a wound,
Shrivelling thy haughty foe to nothingness.

THE SWAN AND THE EAGLE.

[Translated from the German.]

The Swan.

MY days serenely on the waters glide,
Which lave in ripples light my plumy breast
While imaged in the scarcely ruffled tide,
As in a glass, I see myself expressed.

The Eagle.

The lightning-splintered crag is my sojourn—
Abroad upon the tempest's breath I fly,
And where the fires of battle fiercely burn
With pinion bold I wing the murky sky.

The Swan.

Me with delight the azure heavens fill,
While flowers with sweet breath draw me to the shore,
Their balm inhaling float I poised and still
Upon the stream with sunset purpled o'er.

The Eagle.

When from their roots the forests gnarled are rent,
And wild tornadoes, crashing, tear a path;
When from the rifted clouds red bolts are sent,
I jubilant dare the elements' fierce wrath.

The Swan.

At bright Apollo's invitation sweet
In waves of harmony I float and swim,
Or with furled pinion listen at his feet,
While charms his lyre the shades of Tempè dim.

The Eagle.

My perch, the throne itself of Jove, I make;
His bolts I with my talons clutch and bring;
And when my filming eyes their slumber take,
I veil his sceptre with my flagging wing.

The Swan.

The stars and blue vault imaged far below,
In hours of musing often I survey,
And feel a longing in my bosom glow,
Which calls me to my Fatherland away.

The Eagle.

With glance undazzled on the noontide sun,
E'en from my infant years I dared to gaze ;
High o'er the dust of earth, its vapors dun,
I soar allied to the celestial race

The Swan.

Calmly to death I unreluctant bow,
And when the hour arrives, which sets me free,
A dirge-note then I warble wild and low
So that my latest breath is melody.

The Eagle.

Chainless and free my spirit darts away
Leaving behind, below, the extinguished pyre
It swiftly mounts, till in eternal day,
It finds of its lost youth again the fire.

FAUNS.

YES, man was wild in some gone time,
Far back in Nature's savage prime,
And, cave-roofed, pricked a furry ear
At sound of foe or peril near ;
And still the spell of lonely wood
Wakens the Faun or Satyr rude
In the sophisticated breast,
Which Civilization has opprest

With weary weight of fopperies vain,—
Who would not be a Faun again,
Heedless of wind, and dew, and rain,
A citizen of out-of-doors,
Bivouacking on the forest floors,
Knowing the speech of birds and leaves,
With moon for lamp and boughs for eaves,
A tenant of the open air,
Not yet arrived at thought and care,
Dappled with shade of wildwood trees,
Footing it in the sylvan breeze
With beauteous maiden, fountain-born,
Or, Dryad, ruddy as the morn ?

MORNING.

VICISSITUDE is sweet,
From gloom to glistening dew,
From dark collapse of life,
A waif whirled here and there
In vortices of dream,
The mind with joy resumes
Over its moods control
Of its ideal realm, the sceptre and the crown,
In darkness laid aside.
Meantime the sun and dew
Bring joy and hope and strength,
To tread with quickened step
The trite routine of life.

AN AMERICAN VALHALLA.

A FRAGMENT.

THE great republic's hero-hall should stand
Upon some ridge, where sunrise, sunset burning,
Would daily with transfiguration grand
Its marbles, bronzes into gold be turning.

Thither, by gradual steps ascending slow,
Pilgrims should reach a mighty pillared fane,
O'erbrowing haughtily the earth below,
Far-seen of all the dwellers in the plain.

So stood the Panionium of old,
High-gleaming in the clear, Ionian weather,
While at its base Ægean surges rolled,
As men of isle and mainland met together

Who in our Valhall pedestalled should be
For continental homage evermore ?
Leif, Thorfinn, Thorvald, rovers of the sea,
Who first cast anchor off the new world's shore.

There, too, should stand the Genoese in stone,
With visioned eye westward intently peering,
As on his deck, when star of evening shone,
He oft-times stood, the strand of sunset nearing.

The Pater Patriæ, on war-horse proud,
A shape of bronze, should sit colossal-moulded,
Scanning the landscape, as, without a cloud,
It lies anear, afar, map-like unfolded.

Commemorated there in stone should be
The lone enthusiast whose ear with wonder
First heard amid the wildwood's greenery
Niagara's diapason grand of thunder.

There Boone, undaunted hunter, pioneer,
Who loved with passion deep the foliaged wild,
Should on a fallen trunk, with just-slain deer,
Be carved—by civilization undefiled.

Next him should sculptured stand the hero who
First traced the mighty stream adown to ocean—
Father of waters, now that rolleth through
A valley-empire's picturesque commotion.

The roamers of magnolian forests dim
Should there be grouped, seekers of Eldorado,
Who, waging with wild nature conflict grim,
At length succumbed beneath the forest's shadow.

There should be seen a Clinton's stately brow,
Who western inland's isolation ended,
And Erie's fresh wave, floating many a prow,
With brine of ocean by his strong will blended.

But Indian myths and dreamy legends rare
Should to the actual charm of fancy lend,
And thus the Kaatskill's sleeper would be there—
Fable with history's lineaments to blend.

BURNS.

(CARLYLE VERSIFIED.)

WHILE Shakespeare, Milton, through the realm of thought,
Like mighty rivers roll forever more,
Whilst pearls of beauty from their depths are brought,
Admired from age to age, from shore to shore,
This little valley-cloistered fount of song
Up from the heart of nature gushing clear
Will to its margin woo the pilgrim long,
Soothing with wild, sweet cadences his ear,
As shadowed by its pines he muses near.

VICTORY.

AT last upon the heights of victory flew
His banner battle-torn ;
On the scaled mountain tops his sandals grew
Resplendent with the red of morn.

Hyperion-like he stood
Emerged from steep ascent, where glued in blood
His torn feet oft had clung,
As up from crag to crag he sprung,
Triumphant over pain and tears
And struggle long of weary years.
He stood and gazed o'er all the scene below,
Far-stretching, solemn, radiant with auroral glow,
While upward swelling Memnon music thrilled his
ears.

A PRIEST OF NATURE.

HE was a priest of Nature, Brahmin mild
'Mid spicy groves, 'neath skies benignant
dwelling;
nystic meaning, pleasure undefiled
'or him from Night and Day were ever welling.

The verdurous, foodful Earth with forests, streams,
He loved, with flowery leas and skies eternal;
Her interplay of lunar, solar beams,
And all her aspects nightly and diurnal.

His spirit revelled in her thousand charms,
Her mountains' grandeur and her valleys' quiet;
Her scents breeze-blown could medicine his harms,
Her hues and odors were his fancy's diet.

THE POET OF OLD.

ONCE the poet wandered,
With his lyre in hand,
Wandered, singing, harping,
On from land to land.

Like a bird he hovered,
And, where'er he came,
Kindled he each bosom
With his song to flame;

Careless of the morrow
Journeyed he along;
Opened every portal
To the sound of song;

Suâ sponte heart's-ease
In his bosom grew—
Happiness as birthright
Like the gods he knew;

All life's haps and changes
On his chords he rung;
Every thought, emotion,
In him found a tongue;

Voiced he for the lover
Passion of his breast—

Feigned he death to lighten
Islands of the Blest;

Up in ether throned he
Gods the world to sway—
Gods to bend and listen
While their votaries pray.

Soul and sense enchanted,
Drank his accents in;
E'en to marble bosoms
He his way could win.

From her casement Beauty
Leaned his song to hear;
E'en the haughty conqueror
Bent a willing ear;

For without the poet
And his epic lay
Passed his vast existence,
Whirlwind-like, away—

Trace nor vestige leaving,
Where his legions trod,
Which the year effaced not
From the vernal sod.

Thus the poet wandered
In a nobler time,
Wandered, singing, harping,
Free of every clime.

THE MARVEL OF LIFE.

I.

BROTHER, who deem'st thy life but common-place,
An iteration dull of days on days,
Uplift for once thine earthward bending gaze.
Behold the eternal Deep above thee gleaming
With Night's sidereal fires all silent-beaming ;
Orion, Pleiades in revolution grand,
Hurled forth from God's own hand.

II.

See wonderfullest Earth around, below,
Where Winter's storms and Summer's spice-airs blow.
Behold, thou standest in the lapse sublime
Of limitless, eternal Time,
In endless vista evermore
Behind thee stretching, and before.

III.

Encircles thee on every side
Of Force, the never-resting tide
Mysterious, thousand-fold,

Upon whose shoreless current rolled
Thyself, thine earth like bubbles seem,
The rushing foam-flakes of a swollen stream.

IV.

Up from its depths like night-mists from a river
Arising, vanishing forever
In endless interplay of life and death
A many-hued, phantasmagorial show,
Where generations come and go,
Some just inhaling, some surrendering vital breath
Forever fluctuates Being's restless dream,
Whose fleeting shadows we substantial deem.

V.

In Time's wild-roaring loom
Fly to and fro the shuttles swift of doom
Weaving the mystic web of human life—
Texture of dark and bright, of joy and strife.
Rustles the woof, as if in storm-wind dread,
All spirit-wove, one many-glancing thread.

VI.

With many a sylvan century noar
The oak-tree falls with far-heard roar.
Meantime another oak has sprung
Airward from bursting acorn young.

VII.

Arriving hither from the dread Unknown
New men to virile stature quick have grown,
To strength of sinew, passionate fire,
While other men o'erweighed with years expire,
Sink motionless to ashes cold,
Waving thee mute farewells—no more
Thine eyes their long familiar forms behold,
In vain to find them parting-spot explore.

VIII.

Across life's stage the generations pour,
Stormful with torrent-like uproar ;
Forever swallowed is the eager press
In silence and forgetfulness,
But still uprising in the rear
Fresh generations evermore appear
Buoyant and strong with youthful breath
The foremost crowding o'er the verge of death.

IX.

And thou, O Brother, o'er the gulf of doom
Hangest—like dewdrop morning's rays illume—
Hangest but with an evanescent gleam,
Soon to be quenched in dull oblivion's stream.

LEDYARD'S SOLILOQUY.

Even sober New England has romantic chapters in its authentic history and romantic historic characters. Among such, the celebrated traveller, John Ledyard, ranks foremost. Sparks has given us rather a tame biography of this daring, indefatigable adventurer, who was born in Groton, Ct., in 1751, and died in Cairo, Egypt, in 1788, when he was on the eve of setting off on a journey of exploration of the Dark Continent. Ledyard and Mungo Park were forerunners of Stanley. Ledyard accompanied Captain Cook on his last voyage of circumnavigation, and was a favorite with the great explorer. In his youth Ledyard was a student at Dartmouth College, then just established as an Indian school in the wilderness. Becoming tired of his student life, he voyaged in a dugout from Hanover to Hartford, a distance of 140 miles down the Connecticut River. Sir Joseph Banks and Jefferson were both friends and helpers of Ledyard, whom they greatly admired.

FOR days I 've heard from out the misty sky
The clamor of the geese, which to their homes
In Arctic solitudes are speeding fast ;
I hear the bluebird's warble, songster sweet.
But yesterday he left the orange groves,
And palms, and coral islands of the South,
And winged with strong desire, hath hither flown,
Where he was hatched and fledged—thus love of home
Is strong in beast and bird, as 't is in man—
Nay, stronger, for man is cosmopolite,

A citizen of every zone ; freedom
Of all the climes his birthright is, because
With sovereign reason he 's endowed, and thus
To all environments can use himself.
The stir of spring in earth and air, in brook
And tree, and in the heart of man, awakes
In me nomadic instincts, which were born
With me, the longing irrepressible
To roam, which burns within me night and day.
Blue distances—the sight of azure mountains
Far away with strong emotion my heart
Make rise into my throat with sudden sense
Of suffocation. What, though rolling stones
Gather no moss, my first-felt instinct I
Must follow, though it leads to hardship, want,
Unnumbered perils, death !—like Arab, Scyth,
The wanderer's tent I make my habitation,
And nowhere plant a fixed, abiding foot.
Here floats my dugout ready southward me
To bear adown this lovely, sylvan river,
Whose fountain like the Nile's is hidden deep
In woods primeval, ne'er by white man searched.
Good Doctor Wheelock's infant college in
This Indian wilderness but meagre kind
Of learning yields, and book-lore is not that
I seek or want. The earth's vast surface is
The page my restless eyes would fain peruse
By light of sun and star in every clime.
A sedentary life I must not lead,
But give my vigorous youth to exploration,—
Here wild, unconscious Nature is supreme,
And knows not rich variety of race.

My purpose to fulfil I 'll cross the sea
And join some circumnavigating Anson,
Cook, sailing with whom Ulysses-like I
Can an earth-wide wanderer be,—thus shall I
Satiate my hunger, thirst for locomotion ;
From North Star ranging to the Southern Cross.

[*Afloat on the Connecticut river.*]

No monk or hermit in the Thebaid
Was lonelier than I have been all day
Adown this freshet-swollen river drifting.
Its banks are dark and sullen with the shade
Of pines and hemlocks grim. The rain of May,
From which I 'm roofed, falls fitfully. Sometimes
A pouring deluge, then a mist of tears,
As 't were—meantime the shad with silver scales
Are plentiful, and with my scoop-net I
Fare daintily. As for the vernal rain,
Its drops innumerous a pleasant drum-beat
Make upon my canvas awning overhead,
That lulls me into sleep and strange, wild dreams ;
Portents, perchance, of wild experiences
Myself awaiting in the future near.
The sparse, white settlers, who up hither slowly
Migrate from Connecticut, as churlish,
Ursine, bearish seem as bears themselves, that
Show themselves at times on the river's marge,
Meantime their churlish hospitalities
I 'm not dependent on in my good boat,
Which moored to river bank, bed-chamber is
As quiet as e'en Somnus, god of sleep,

Himself could ask, whereof I read in Ovid's verse,
Which is my solace, as my dugout glides
Adown the stream swiftly and silently.
At twilight, when I 'm anchored off a meadow,
The choral frogs me through the thickening dark
Salute with querulous notes, announcing spring.
With golden dandelions thick inlaid
I, here and there, behold the treeless shore,
Which earliest blossom on Novanglian sward
Of all the flowers, which deck the wilderness.
Of the Six Nations I my woodcraft learned,
So that no stranger am I in the wild.
The bark of forest trees me guidance yields,
Not lost in mazes of the wilderness
But steering straightly, confidently through,
Such cunning in this sylvan hemisphere
Which more abounds in trees than beasts or men,
Is well enough, but in the other half
Of earth, where all the human interest lies
As yet, and where the storied soil has known
The plough for years innumerable, 't will do
Me little good—my navigation lone
Of this unfamed, but lovely new-world river,
Which celebration sweet in song deserves
As much as vaunted Tiber, Thames, or Rhine,
Is my first perilous adventure as
A traveller, explorer, though no danger
Yet me has confronted. As in a vision
Thus far I've floated pleasantly along
Day dreaming, reading my Ovid and New
Testament, which my only volumes are.

Meantime my boat, as if a magic bark,
No helmsman needs—Ah ! this is May, the month
Of poets and of lovers fond. All day
A silvery haze has veiled the vernal heaven,
While softly has the south wind breathed o'er river,
Meadow, forest, to verdure stirring earth.
A purple pageant is the sunset's fire ;
Such days are nuptials bright of earth and sky,
Or in old mythic phrase of Jupiter
And Terra, on whose breast he amorous falls
In fertilizing showers and vernal beams.

Last night my boat was moored beneath a knoll,
On which a thick-leaved pine was musical.
I sank to sleep, lulled by its murmurs wild.
Methought I was begirt by turbaned men,
Dusk faces, flashing eyes, which glared on me
With deadly and fanatic hate—the hate
Of fierce religious bigotry, which thirsts
For blood of heresy, and gloateth o'er
The blazing fagots unbelievers burning.
Around me was a populous city vast ;
A moving pageant 't was of horsemen, camels,
Women veiled, and blacks of Sennaar, grim Turks,
Muftis and dervishes, the motley throng
Of Orient metropolis ; lithe shafts
Of minarets the blue, blue ether pierced.
Methought in mortal sickness that I lay,
So that the cloud of death soon veiled my eyes,
And hid from view the gorgeous, alien scene.

So vivid was the dream, it all my thoughts
Has darkened. What fantastic tricks doth sleep,
Which Ovid makes a potent deity,
With us poor mortals in the night hours play,
When passive are our intellects, as 't were,
Wide open lying to incursions dark
Of vagrant powers of air, which haunt the night.

But, hark! what shouts are these I hear from shore,
Where see I people running to and fro
And beckoning me? The mystery is solved,
I hear a cataract's roar—now strong arms do
Your office quick and cheat the rushing flood.

[*He rows vigorously and seizes a rope thrown to him, and is extricated with his boat.*]

Good friends, a thousand thanks for your kind aid,
Without which I were now a lifeless corse,
The sport of torrent maddened by its plunge
Adown yon steep.

I am alone again,
Escaped from death, and glides my boat along
As buoyantly as though naught had occurred.
Henceforth I float, with open ears alert,
To catch the sound of roaring waterfalls
And foaming shallows, where my dugout strong
Might be impaled on slippery, pointed rocks,
And I be whirled a waif forlorn crushed dead.

TO HUMBOLDT.

I.

HIEROPHANT of Truth ! thy marble brow
Its ample breadth and height may well expand
In many a park and square of this our land,
Where metropolitan myriads ebb and flow.
For thou wert Liberty's apostle grand ;
Truth, freedom, were thy watchwords evermore.
From bondage to Semitic myths of yore,
Barbaric dreams, has freed the world thy lore.
The harmony the Samian only dreamed,
Thine ear heard. Thou did'st not interpolate
On Nature's Fasti petty human date,
But wiser of her years eternal deemed.
More sacred trust to marble ne'er was given
Than thy grand brow, gauger of earth and heaven.

II.

An envoy from some grander sphere of night
With larger knowledge, cosmic wisdom full
To sharpen and illume our spirits dull,
Star-travelled, on our orb thou did'st alight.
Clearly beheld thy keen, clairvoyant sight
Through adamantine mass the central core,

Where lonely Vesta tendeth evermore
The eternal hearth-fire burning fierce and bright.
Unterrified, with curious gaze serene,
E'en when her mountain-chimneys shook the globe,
Thou stood'st spectator of the awful scene,
And saw her Earth with desolation robe,
Where, neighboring heaven along the central line,
With fires fuliginous the Andes shine.

III.

No cloistered theorist wast thou ; but 'neath
The heaven of every zone, in light of sun
And star, upland and lowland air did'st breathe.
Your lore from Nature's own warm bosom won
Is living wisdom and no idle dream.
The tropic skies serene, fretted with fires
Of Argo, Centaur, Aldebaran, seem
Your Kosmos to o'erarch ; the palm aspires
Before your reader's eye ; the South's warm air
He breathes ; the gently-heaving ocean hears
Pulsing on golden strands ; savannas fair
Of grass and flowers beholds ; while skyward rears
Its walls the condor-haunted mountain chain,
Whose peaks far off the blue of heaven stain.

MONADNOC.

TO THE SUMMER TOURIST.

I.

O REFUGEE, from lowland heat,
Who findest on my heights a breezy seat—
Pilgrim from rich-soiled prairie-land
Ne'er until now by wind of mountain fanned,
Behold a liberal arc of earth's periphery grand!

II.

Feel'st not sublime enlargement here
Inhaling bracing ether clear
On Nature's bare, uplifted breast,
With naught to hinder vision East or West,
Beyond excursions of the farmer's plough,
Which never scarred my cloud-compelling brow,
Where floras wild nor tame can grow,
Where on primeval rocks 't were vain to sow?

III.

Feel'st not thy spirit with thy sight expand,
As gazest thou on nether sea and land,
Inspecting with a curious ken
The haunts and tilth of much-contriving men,

Whose hands and brains persistent victory o'er
Wild, sloven Nature conquer more and more?

IV.

The vast and many-featured lowland world,
Against whose misty marge the ocean-wave is hurled,
Spire, forest, river, lake, and vale,
And highway white, and trains, which wreaths of vapor trail,
Far down beneath thine eyes, behold, unfurled!

V.

List, while thy forehead cools my breeze,
Unto a Mountain's many memories—
No sacred poets in the foretime dim
My haughty crest were here to hymn.
Over a lyreless, savage waste I threw
My valley-darkening shade from welkin blue;
No graceful Oread deigned to haunt my woods,
Nor heard the pipe of Pan my solitudes.
Not e'en with woodman's axe my gorges rung,
What time the saffron morning sprung.
My centuried, shapely pines succumbed at last
To gravitation or tornado's blast—
Unlike my old-world mountain peers,
For immemorial years,
While cave oracular and gorgeous shrine
And haunted fountains cold,

Which with the lymph of inspiration rolled,
Drew votaries to their heights for aid divine;
Here in the unfrequented West
I reared, untrod, unsung, my lonely crest,
Beyond the flight of Muses nine.

VI.

Yet though nought sentient knew me then
Save savage beasts and beastlike men,
My mountain functions cheerful I
Fulfilled in loneliness of northern sky;
I wore woven in high air's loom
My robes of glory and of gloom.
In days serene my glance I sent
Wide o'er the savage continent;
The distant ocean, once that laved my feet,
When pines and billows sang in concert sweet,
With signal fires of Morn and Sunset red,
I greeted from my far-seen head,
Still sadly mindful of the time
When round my base was heard his monotone sublime,
And basked I in a softer, tropic clime.

VII.

Once up my palm-plumed sides did pant
The huge snake-handed elephant,
For changes marvellous have swept o'er me
In flower and beast and bird and tree.

VIII.

A stern, petrific ice age did erase
From off my sides each genial, tropic trace ;
Gashed and denuded by its glacial plough
At last on base and desolate ravine
I felt upspring a temperate flora green,
Till clothed and shapen as you see me now,
Again I towered aloft in air serene,
With silvery cloudlets drifting o'er my brow.

IX.

But truce to wild, primeval memories dim,
Of vanished and convulsive æons grim,
Whereof the deeply-furrowed scars
I bear aloft among the stars.
At length, after unnumbered years had flown
Of shaggy wilderness lone ;
Of floras and of faunas wild ;
Of fenceless fields, whereon no tillage smiled ;
Of bridgeless rivers, which no mill wheels turned,
No tonnage floated but the bark canoe,
Whereon their evening lights no cities threw ;
Of glorious Autumn suns, which vainly burned,
Because no heedful eye their splendor knew ;
The globe-encircling Aryan came
With *possè* girt of lower natures tame,
With household Lares in his train
And seeds of cultured flower and golden grain,
At length his many-centuried exode far
From sunrise reaching to the sunset's star.

X.

Amid the pine and hemlock's leafage drear
He planted Civilization's banner here ;
At last the low of ruminant herd
My mountain pastures' echoes stirred ;
Far down my flanks the steepled village grew,
And pale-faced vernal ploughmen furrows drew,
While chanticleer his morning clarion blew.

XI.

Rippling in hot midsummer's breeze
The golden ears of Ceres sprang ;
The housefly buzzed ; murmured the bees,
And with the bleat of flocks hill pastures rang.

XII.

O'er all the lowland world,
The smoke of thousand hearth fires curled
Upward in morning's red,
And tinted by the sun hung roseate round my head.
E'en Winter stern took on a cheerful glow
From stir of human life below,
Where silence erst and petrifying cold
Were universal empire wont to hold
Over the shaggy continent ;
Save when the hissing snow all night its fury spent
On shore, on forest, river, lake, and fen,
And wigwams sparse of savage men

Stirring the heart of sylvan nature wild
To moans as of a grief ne'er to be reconciled.

XIII.

But all is different, changed and milder now,
When in the August heats upon my brow
Young lovers sit and cooing gaze
On underlying towns and iron ways,
And flash of spires in distance dim
Of cities on the horizon's rim ;
Unhymned no longer now I stand,
As erst I stood above a savage land ;
Thanks to a mighty bard I now am known
Worldwide to men of every zone.

XIV.

Buoyant with youth the minstrel came
And gave my lonely peak its mead of fame,
Interpreting to lowland eyes
Significance, that in my grandeur lies ;
Up-gathering in his lofty rhyme
Ideal harvests from my crags sublime,
And chronicles of eldest time.

XV.

But he is dead and evermore
My Oreads his loss deplore,
Who made Monadnoc's name on every shore
Famed as god-haunted mounts of yore.

He should have slept the long and final sleep,
Where neighboring stars might nightly keep
Their vigils o'er his sacred rest,
Entombed upon my granite breast
Far up above the haunts of men,
But still within their vision's ken.

BERENICE'S HAIR.

E Bereniceo vertice cæsariem
Fulgentem clare.
CATULLUS.

I.

IN stellar sheen,
Ptolemaic queen,
Your votive tress still men behold,
Still palm-embow'red,
And lotos-flowered
Runs Nilus where you reigned of old.

II.

Still lives the verse,
Whose lines rehearse
How Conon, famed for starry lore,
In Lion's lair
Your gleaming hair
Beheld enskied for evermore.

III.

Siren of Nile
With Paphian wile,
And lavish loveliness rich-dowered,
Not you alone
From Egypt's throne,
Heart-conquering glances round you showered.

IV.

Another face
From haughty race,
Like you, of fierce Epirus sprung,
Before it bowed
Triumvir* proud,
Till with the love-tale wide earth rung.

V.

Her barge's gleam
On Cydnus' stream
Shines flashing still to farthest shore.
In eyes of men
Brush, chisel, pen,
Have kept her radiant evermore.

VI.

The aspic's bite,
Which could unite

* Mark Antony.

With venom sweet death-sundered souls,
Immortal verse
Will still rehearse,
While rivers flow and ocean rolls.

THE QUAIL.

SOUGHT I in my boyhood's vale
Vainly for the whistling quail
With its note portending rain
Whistled o'er and o'er again—
Plaintive, mellow, lonesome, wild
'Witching me, a vagrant child.

Orchard, meadow searched I through,
But my charmer never knew
Other than a tongue of air
Luring me from field to field
To find what feathered throat might yield
A warble so abrupt and rare.

An isle of quails old Homer sings,
Where my boyhood's long-sought bird,
Doubtless, is forever heard,
Its mellow note forever rings.

When ebbing life begins to fail
Unto Quail-land I would sail,
In its meadows hear once more
The island's bird its sweet note pour ;

Hear my boy-time's mystic strain
Fluted in its fields again,
Till summer's green and summer's sky
Should seem unto my weary eye
As fresh and bright as when I heard,
A wayward child, Ortygia's bird ;
Thus calmly, sweetly, could I die,
Lulled by that note of days gone by.

THE PLEIADES.

THROUGH village trees
The Pleiades
High gleaming I behold,
And as I gaze,
Recall their rays
The starry myths of old.

The beauteous choir
A sister's fire
Extinguished still deplore,*
Whose vanished beam
Nor vale nor stream
Lights up, nor sea nor shore.

But still at even
The glorious Seven,
Though dimmed with grief, arise,

* Like the lost Pleiad seen no more below.—BYRON.

As when they gave
To land and wave
Spring's breath from Grecian skies ;

As when their stars
Were calendars,
Which sailors, ploughmen read
At eve on high
In vernal sky,
While cranes flew overhead.

Old Homer's gaze
Their welcome rays
Saw through Ionia's air,
When springtime's breeze
Hushed wintry seas,
And wafted odors rare.

To battlefield
Pelides' shield
Their imaged splendor bore,
But more their sheen
Loved pastoral scene,
Than sods bestained with gore.

No stars arise
To poet's eyes
More sweet for thoughts they bring
Of favoring gale,
And bellying sail,
And balmy air of spring.

IN MEMORIAM.

(CHARLES F. LOW.)

LONG sundered friend, thy star went down
In that peninsula of flowers,
Where earth ne'er wears a wintry frown,
And founts of youth keep green the bowers.

A clime wherein to live, not die ;
Whose scents and balms from far invite
To sojourn 'neath a gentler sky
Pale hectics smit with northern blight.

What wooed thee to that southern shore,
The Andalusia of the west ?
Some dim surmise its waters bore
An anodyne for thy unrest !

Spent swimmer, when the wind and foam
Had conquered—o'er thy swooning brain
What pleasant airs of youth and home,
Preluding death, breathed once again !

Waved vainly on that tropic strand
The orange thicket, palm, and vine,—
Thy dying dreams were softly fanned
By murmurs of the northern pine.

Thou didst not heed the flash and gleam
Of tropic seas, the surf's uproar,
But inly saw thy native stream
Its mountain-cradled waters pour.

Lone was thy death, no friendly eye,
Nor succoring hand, to save was near;
Above, the mute and alien sky;
Around, the sea, thy heaving bier.

Yet, from that sullen surge of death
Thy stainless soul as lightly sprung
As if to catch thy parting breath
Some mourner fond had o'er thee hung.

Henceforth that lone Floridian shore,
Its fabled founts and gorgeous bloom,
Are hallowed by one memory more—
The legend of thy watery doom.

HAWTHORNE'S "MARBLE FAUN."

WHOE'ER the life of Italy would know
Ere Rome arose, while yet her Seven Hills
Were haunted thickets, he must surely go
To Hawthorne's page—his mystic genius fills
The prehistoric void, the sylvan days,
When Saturn old was king, with sickle bright
For sceptre—kindles he to gold the haze
Of gray Etrurian centuries shedding steady light
On times which Livy, Niebuhr, leave opaque—

Clairvoyant spirit! Gentle Virgil, e'en,
Like thee, clear retrospection could not take,
Seeing the fauns and nymphs with eye serene
Mingling their life in fountain-murmuring glen
And vine-twined grove with that of mortal men.

CARLYLE AND EMERSON.*

IN dust their perishable forms now lie,
But through the ages evermore
Their thoughts like winged seeds to and fro will fly,
And lodgment find on every shore.

Though 'tween their graves a stormy world-sea rolls,
Henceforth will they conjoined be reigning,
Lake starry Dioscuri, close-leagued souls
To wide and wider sway attaining.

A bright Ithuriel was one, whose lips
Clear organs were of reason pure;
Whose fulgent spirit knew not sin's eclipse—
Life's mystery read with intuition sure,

Touched him to an enthusiasm sweet
The purple morning, budding spring,
As in his intervale with devious feet
He welcomed home each migrant wing.

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* *Vide* the "Correspondence of Thomas Carlyle and Ralph Waldo Emerson."

He knew one power, one inspiration wrought
In star and clod, in bird and tree,
In man and beast, and thus his verses taught
Aright creation's chemistry.

His earthlier brother delved in archives dim
Of vanished years—man's tale retold—
Fixed pole stars truth and justice shone for him—
With seerlike might his utterance rolled.

Perfervid genius of his race did burn
In him with more than racial fire—
Seemed back to earth strong Luther to return,
As voiced he indignation's ire.

Like Cyclops in his forge's lurid glow
From shapeless mass Jove's bolts of thunder pounding,
Refashioned he the world with sturdy blow
On blow that rang from zone to zone resounding.

Both preached a gospel of the present tense,
An immanent God, who resteth never,
Pervading, moulding with omnipotence
The world as palpably as ever.

And now in ocean-sundered graves they sleep,
Nor waft each other words of cheer—
No record Friendship's brightest annals keep
Of amity more high, sincere.

TO BISMARCK.

[These lines were written many years ago, soon after the last attempt to assassinate the great German, when there were continual reports of his health breaking up. It seems that the circulation of such sinister rumors was one of the regular modes of attack of their dreaded adversary by the German Ultramontane journals, as was shown by a state trial in Berlin. *Apropos* of Redbeard of the Cave, or Frederic Barbarossa, Carlyle, in his "Life of Frederick the Great," says: "German tradition thinks Kaiser Barbarossa is not yet dead, but only sleeping till the bad world reach its worst, when he will reappear. He sits within the hill near Salzburg yonder, says German tradition, its fancy kindled by the strange noises in that hill (limestone hill) from hidden waters and by the grand rocky look of the place. A peasant once stumbling into the interior saw the kaiser in his stone cavern. Kaiser sat at a marble table, leaning on his elbow, winking, only half asleep; beard had grown through the table and streamed upon the floor. He looked at the peasant one moment, asked him something about the time it was, then drooped his eyelids again. Not yet time, but will be soon! He is winking as if to awake and set his shield aloft by the Roncalic fields again with 'Ho! every one that is suffering wrong, or that has strayed devil-ward, guideless and done wrong, which is far fataler!'"]

O'ER Europe for this decade past,
Thor's hammer thou hast wielded
With such a crushing emphasis
All barriers have yielded.

An epoch thou hast made, and art
  Entitled to vacation,
To give thy sinews conflict-wrung,
  Chance for recuperation.

If thou art Redbeard from the cave,
  Resume thy centuried dozing
At Salzburg there, thy brain o'erwrought
  From cares of state reposing.
No harm can come to Fatherland
  While thou again art sleeping ;
For younger eyes the Rhine-watch stern
  Will through thy nap be keeping.

Thy race is unified, and thus
  Thou hast fulfilled thy mission—
E'en though a recreant moiety
  To priestcraft bow submission.
Such are not Teutons, hearts of oak,
  Sons of the northern forest,
Whose virgin manhood saved the world,
  Then when its need was sorest.

The poor sham Cæsar of the Seine,
  The senile priest of Tiber,
Are impotent when grappling with
  Thy tough Teutonic fibre,
Kant's "Critique" and thy needle-guns
  Have riddled hoar tradition,
And struck with stupor moribund
  The anarch Superstition.

What though at times he wakes and tries
To launch his creaking thunder!
The people gaze in mockery,
And do not stand from under;
For German thought has cleared away,
And German arms are clearing
The spectres of the past, while day,
The day of truth is nearing.

Then, hail to Bismarck! vainly seek
Fanatic thugs to slay him;
Knowledge and truth, whose knight he is,
In panoply array him;
The northern muse, Tuiskoné,
An oaken garland wreathing
Entwines his brow, his meed of praise
In notes heroic breathing.

Odin in Valhall boasteth not
A sterner, starker spirit,
Old Fritz' and Luther's mantles both
Their champion doth inherit.
The Baresark marrow in his bones
Preserve him long to mortals!
Ere Asgard shall, to welcome him,
Swing wide its golden portals!

1874.

THE OLD GODS.

Zeus.

SHRANK I long since, O Jehovah,
On my hill-throne to a shadow ;
Ceased to summon into conclave
Gods of ocean, stream, and meadow.
Reigned I, while the nations dreaming
Peopled air with shapes immortal,—
Whom the poets saw in vision
Thronging oft my cloudy portal.

But e'en to the Age of Reason
You your kingdom have extended,—
Naught have gained you ; your dominion
Will at last like mine be ended.
Storm-clouds on the heights of Sinai
Form no more your dread pavilion ;
Round its barren base no longer
Kneel the low-browed, awe-struck million.

Where we dwelt, the mountain ether,
With its keen breath, chills and freezes,—
Zion, Meru, and Olympus
Fan no more celestial breezes.

Jehovah.

Feel I, too, I am a shadow,—
Primal man's imagination

Shaped me, throned me in the heavens,
Deemed the All my hand's creation.

Of the Universe the vision
On man's soul at length is breaking;
Scorns he now his ancient sky-gods,
At whose bolts he erst was quaking—
Law of duty in his reason,
Not on stony tablets findeth—
All things into ordered cosmos
Feels the nameless might that bindeth;

That through boundless space, duration,
Restless, tireless throbs forever,—
Thus illumined men our lieges
Will be, as they erst were, never.
Even now our airy sceptres,
Bards, so loyal once, are scorning;
Myths they call us—men colossal,
Visions of the young world's morning.

Brahma.

I, an oceanic essence,
Formless, bodiless abstraction
As a dream was ever worshipped,
An abyss of mere inaction.
O'er the golden horn of Meru
Float I tranquil, calm as ever,
Mindless, passionless my votaries
Change from me cannot dissever.

Ormuzd.

I, an optimistic vision,
Am the good time always looming,
When the earth, a sinless garden,
Shall with amaranths be blooming.

Odin.

Darkly with its sky-wide branches
Yggdrasil, the ash tree, waveth ;
Dead was fairest Balder long since,—
Wind of doom through Asgard raveth.

Pantheos.

As in inlets, bays, the ocean
Ceaselessly its billows urges,
So through finite spirits rolling
Heave and flash my radiant surges ;
Like the tranquil, cloudless ether,
Plain and mountain-peak transcending,
I, the pure and sovereign reason,
O'er low vales of sense am bending.

Through boundless space, expanded
In the atom too I 'm dwelling ;
Every moment feels me pulsing,
Though through Æons I am swelling.
When, in sense and languor sunken,
Grovel every race and nation,
Some great soul idea-drunken
Make I stem the degradation.

Pour I through his lips and glances
  Surge-like, flame-like life remoulding,
Till eternal truth and beauty
  Man's purged eyesight is beholding,
Gods provincial, cloud-compellers,
  Primal races, nations swaying!
Other than your petty sceptres
  Is the universe obeying!

PERSONALITY.

IN the old books, the Bibles, Iliads,
  Vedas, Eddas, and the rest written far
Back in time, all power is personal—
All power, efficacy, and might proceed
From personality. Primitive man
So thought. Earth was a person, the mother
Who all things bore. Wheat nourished life because
The mother, Ceres, made it nutritive;
And wine made glad the heart because Bacchus
Gave to it gladdening, festive potency.
The thunder of the summer shower was hurled
Forth from some red right-hand supreme in heaven.

This personal force found everywhere of old
By primal man, we, with far wider scope,
Find only in ourselves and dumb relations,

The lower animals, which are persons
Rudimental. Intelligence and will,
Which make up personality, are not supreme
In nature. Higher powers than these create,
Originate. These only can perceive
And judge—too often erroneously—
And use forces they find already at hand.
Man is not central or final, but a link.

No special pomp his advent marked, as if
He were the crown of things. The countless stars
Were shining, though not to light his entry ;
Earth had already many guests ; she could
Feed him among the rest. No cosmoplast
Made him like statue from Assyrian clay,
Red Mesopotamian earth, the master of
A royal Asian park or paradise.

Man gradually grew beginning low,
To his erect and glorious symmetry,
Sky-fronting brow, intelligence, and will,
And voice articulate, reason's vehicle.
He soon mistook himself for sovereign Lord
Of all he saw, because he stood erect
And had the skill to utilize nature.
He in his monstrous, primitive conceit
Thought all phenomena had reference
To himself, a mere phenomenon
Among the rest. Earthquakes had moral ends,
And volcanoes flamed because of human sin !
In sign of woe at some proud mortal's death,

The sun, with veil fuliginous, hid his face!
Birds flew, and lightning flashed, and meteors
blazed
Subservient to Etruria's augury!

If nature giveth special heed to man,
Why drowneth him the sea-storm as readily
As the rat which haunts the ship he sails in?
While all its populace were on their knees
In act of worship proud Lisboa fell,
Toppled into ruin by the earthquake.
The insurgent sea o'erwhelmed it, while the earth
Gaping devoured its suppliant myriads,
Whose gods were helpless as their worshippers.

Ascend some lofty mountain's brow, e'en in a land
Most humanized, and gaze around.
How small a figure man is in the scene!
The vast and solitary sky above,
Desert of sunshine, wind, and azure air
Bends o'er his cities, towns, and hamlets lone
With an immensity which dwarfs them quite,
Making them only less small than dwellings
Of the ant and bee and bird. Thousands of years
Of human occupancy leave no trace,
Or scarce a trace, upon the unheeding earth,
Whose soil, though sepulchre of nations grand,
Bursts at the call of spring to wonted bloom,
Wearing no widow's weeds nor signs of woe,
Remembering not her evanescent lord
Self-styled, Phœnician, Etruscan, Greek, who

Piled her ages ago with glorious cities,
Temples august, wherein the human shape
Was deified as ruler of the whole,
Creator and disposer of the world.
Temples and cities now are wrecks. Their sites
To nature have reverted, who with flowers
As fresh as bloomed ten thousand years ago,
When still unquarried were their columns fallen,
O'erruns plinth, mossy architrave, graceful
Ivied statues crushed, to show her forces
Human glory or decadence heed not,
Nor make sole aim of their activity.
Thus holds she in her mighty arms
The life of man, unit and aggregate ;
Living ere he appeared, and blooming still
Over the ruins of his noblest tribes.

Look out
Into the abyss of space, when overhead
The thick-starred midnight mutely, grandly reigns !
No voice is heard, no personality
In that ineffable expanse appears ;
The power unspeakable which rules the all
Sits not on thrones, wears not the human shape
Of Aryan Thunderer or Semitic Jove.
Higher than personal power creates, pervades,
And rules the ineffable universe.

A little provincial planet ours ; meek
Pensioner on the bounty of the sun,
Mighty metropolis of life and light.

But even He, with all his retinue,
Is but an unmarked atom in the All!
Jean Paul, surnamed the Only-One, depicts
The universe as orphaned in his "Dream,"
If there be not somewhere, supremely throned,
A personal God or giant man, Father
Of Christ, of all the planets born on earth,
Could such an one control the torch-dance wild,
The grinding press of suns, he speaketh of,
Which throng abysmal, boundless space?
Surely the mightiest personality
Were weak with gravitation matched, or light,
Or heat, or any mood of the unwearied power,
The force of forces, heart of hearts, and soul
Of souls, in all, who think, or will, or feel.
'T were grossest arrogance, e'en in the Sun's
Inhabitants, their orb imperial,
To make the scene of mixture such as that
The Galilean tale of incarnation
Fables. The infinite power eternal,
Which knitteth all in mystic unity,
With mortal maid commingled on a time
On this small globe, as was Olympian Zeus
With lightning-blasted Semelé in Thebes!
The myths are kindred and of equal sooth—
Persons spring forth from Being Absolute,
Who is their deepest self, and ebbs and flows
In them as ocean in its friths and bays.
Absolute being pulses through all things,
Insensate atoms, as well as spirits,
With ceaseless throb which knows not weariness.

Matter is spirit's bride and complement.
There is no sacred nor profane, no high
Nor low ; the eternal universe is
In all its parts eternal ; concentred
Equally in every point of space and time
Extended matter and self-conscious spirit
Glows, palpitates the Being Absolute
Consecrating nought by dwelling specially
In it, but alike informing all things.
Knowledge at length has put the finishing stroke
To primitive human pride and arrogance
Which traced to human artifice the world,
And, blind to its majestic order, dreamed
'T was swayed by fickle human governance,
And not by laws no supplication can
For one brief instant nullify, no prayer.

NORTH CONWAY.

REIGNETH here the peace, seclusion
Which the worn heart loveth well,
Street and highway mountain-shadowed
Seem entranced as by some spell
Such as haunted Tempé's valley
In the fable time of yore—
Here to nymphs of fount and forest
Sylvan shrines might rise once more.

Lord it giant ridge and summit,
Up, where stars of twilight glow,
'Mid her blasted pines wild Nature
Laughs at puny man below.
Softer seem the emerald meadows
With their tilth and sward of green
Calm reposing in the shadow
Of the crags, which o'er them lean.

Here along the devious highway
Saunterers breathe untainted air,
And in dell and whispering pine wood
Refuge find from din and care.
Looms aloft in middle heaven
Monarch mountain's cone afar,
Sweetly shines, as falleth twilight,
O'er yon ridge the evening star.

Not the scream of locomotive,
As through wood and glen it pants,
Nor the throng of summer idlers
Conway's valley disenchants.
Art and wealth with costly villas,
More and more may crowd the scene,
But unconquered o'er yon ridges
Nature throned will still be queen,

Breathe from out her pines and hemlocks
A primeval, mystic spell,

Pride of puny art with splendors
Of October's sunsets quell,
Vindicate her right to worship,
As men worshipped her of yore,
Where, o'er haunted glens of Hellas,
Immemorial mountains soar.

As the human myriads thicker
O'er the wide land spread and flow,
And with hamlets, towns, and cities
All its boundless surface sow,
This still valley to the great world
Will be shrine to noisy street,
Inland haven, tired man's recess ;
Mountain refuge, calm retreat.

Rousseaus, Obermanns, nor Wordsworths
Breathed have yet this mountain air,
But ere long will sons of genius
To these new world Alps repair.
Here with stir of grand emotions
Find their jaded spirits teem,
Hither bringing their Penates,
Make this vale our Academe.

TRANSLATIONS FROM HEINE.

SONNET TO HEINE.

Mein herz gleicht dem meere
Hat sturm und ebb' und fluth,
Und manche schöne perle
In seiner tiefe ruht.

HEINE.

DESPITE his tuneful worship, Eros slew
His votarist, the silver cord unstrung
Which held his life, and paralyzed his tongue,
Though in his palmiest time the boy-god knew
No lyre which in his praise more constant rung
With strings vibrating in each breeze that blew,
Whether the palm and orange southward drew
His steps or North Sea's spray was o'er him flung.
In depths of his clear spirit, far below
The storm-vexed surface and the vulgar day,
Full many a pearl of beauty gleaming lay.
True bard, he felt the prophet's sacred glow
The future of his fatherland to show
At length triumphant o'er hereditary foe.

ANTICIPATION OF OLD AGE.

WRITTEN AT TWENTY-SIX.*

I.

AT last dull winter o'er my heart will reign,
Besnow my locks, with mist my vision blear;
In moss-grown tombs my friends will long have lain,
While I, an unreaped stalk, stand lonely here.

II.

New generations will to life have sprung
With hopes, ideals, which I never knew—
Strange names will then be heard, new songs be sung,
And mine forgot be cherished but by few,

III.

Who haply still will honor me forlorn,
As dull oblivion claims me for its own,
While meet I from the many only scorn,
And love, effusion of the heart, from none.

---

* A free, versified translation of a beautiful prose passage in Heine's "Ideen, Dás Buch, Le Grand," 1826.

IV.

My mouldering harp then roseate boys will bring
And place it laughing in my trembling hand,
"Silent too long, O lazy graybeard, sing
The songs wherewith in youth you charmed our land."

V.

And I shall take the harp and sweep each chord,
And tears will bloom in my dim eyes again,
As falters on my lips each tuneful word
Of old-time lays with tremulous refrain.

VI.

From off my vision melts the mist of years,
Old joys and sorrows in me wake once more,
While on my harp-strings glisten trembling tears
Of sweet regret from full heart running o'er.

VII.

And as again the river blue I see,
The palaces that shadows o'er it fling,
And maidens fair, who beckoning smile on me,
Rapt into song of Brenta's flowers I sing.

VIII.

'T will be my farewell lay—on me again,
As in the nights of youth, the stars will gaze,
And nightingales, long dead, renew their strain,
While kiss my cheeks the moon's enamoured rays.

IX.

As works the spell, in sleep my eyes will close,
And like my harp-notes die my soul away,
While o'er it breeze of memory softly blows
Perfumed with scents from Brenta's flowers astray.

X.

My northern grave the palm-tree may not shade,
For there its pillared foliage ne'er would bloom ;
Beneath a linden shall my dust be laid,
And o'er it lovers sit in twilight's gloom.

XI.

There, while my sad tree, darkling, softly sighs,
And rocks the greenfinch silent in its boughs,
The happy ones will scarcely bend their eyes
Upon my headstone, busy with their vows.

XII.

But thither, when in lonely after years,
Sad memory the swain bereaved shall lead,
He oft and long my legend through his tears,
"He loved the flowers of Brenta," then will read.

GREETING THE SEA.

I GREET thee, O thou everlasting Sea!
Ten thousand greetings give I unto thee
With heaving and exultant breast,
As greeted thee of yore

Ten thousand Grecian hearts
With homesick passion yearning for the West,
From iron sleet of keen barbaric darts
At length escaped, and famous evermore
In every following age on every shore.

The billows foamed and rolled,
The billows flashed and roared ;
The Sun his roseate splendor poured
As they the Euxine's waves once more behold ;
In clamorous flocks the gulls affrighted flew,
As shoreward rushing hove their ranks in view ;
Steeds stamped and clanging bucklers rung,
As shouted in full pæan every tongue,
Thalatta ! Thalatta ! *

Thus hail I thee,
O thou eternal Sea !
As speech of home thy billowy anthems seem,
The sparkle of thy brine I see like childhood's dream,
While fondly I recall
The loves and gorgeous toys of other days,
The gifts of Christmas, roseate coral sprays,
The goldfish, pearls, and iridescent shells
Which thou, with thy mysterious spells,
Guardest in thy translucent palace hall.

* Old Greek word meaning sea, which was shouted by the soldiers of Xenophon when they came in sight of the Euxine sea after their long and successful retreat from Upper Asia to the coast.

How have I longed for thee,
O thou sonorous Sea
When exiled from thy shores afar!
As withered roses are,
When in herbarium pressed,
So lay my heart within my breast.

On thee, blue Ocean, gazing, feel I now,
As once I felt from dim sick-chamber going,
After a winter-long confinement drear,
When blinded me the dazzling atmosphere,
The brightness and the bloom of emerald Spring,
Of orchards with white blossoms blowing,
While all the scented air with joy was ringing,
And in blue heaven the birds were singing,
Thalatta! Thalatta!

THE PINE AND THE PALM.

A PINE in the north stands lonely
High on an upland cold—
It slumbers, while ice and snowflakes
With raiment white it fold.

Of a palm afar it dreameth
In depths of morning-land,
That alone in sadness pineth
O'er a waste of burning sand.

THE THOUGHTS OF LOVE.

AS in the field the waving wheat-stalks grow,
So in man's spirit harvests fair
Of thoughts are blooming in ideal air,
Love's tender thoughts are flowers of red and blue
Between the stalks that blow,
Blossoms of red and blue,
Which star the field with various hue.

The churlish reapers fling you, flowers. aside,
As good for naught to use,
While scornfully the flails your blossoms bruise.
E'en poor wayfarers, whom
Delights and cheers your beauteous bloom,
Their heads are won't to shake
And naught of you but lovely weeds can make.

But she, the rural maid,
The garland-weaver fair
With reverence gathers you to braid
In tresses of her golden hair.
And thus adorned unto the dance hies she
Where pipes and fiddles make a festal noise,
Or to the stilly beechen tree
Where sweeter sounds her lover's voice
Than pipes and viols' melody.

A MOUNTAIN IDYL.

From "Harzreise," 1824.

THE fir-trees round it rustle,
Above shines moon of gold,
Where on the mount it standeth,
The hut of miner old.

An elbow-chair it boasteth,
Fair carven to the eye;
Who sits therein is lucky—
The lucky one am I.

A footstool holds the small maid,
Her arm upon me lies;
A red, red rose her mouth is,
Two blue stars are her eyes.

Gaze up to me the blue stars,
As I were skylike tall;
She roguishly her finger
Lays on her rose-mouth small.

"No, mother us regards not
So busily she 's spinning;
And father on his zither
The old tune keeps a dinning."

The small maid whispers softly
With voice suppressed and low :
" Full many a weighty secret
As confidante I know.

" But, since my aunt departed,
We go to town no more ;
The city's gests and pageants
We see not as before.

" Aloft here dwell we lonely
On mountain cold abiding—
Us winter's high-piled snowdrifts
As in a grave are hiding.

" And I, a timid maiden,
Am stricken with affright
At noise of mountain kobolds
So busy in the night."

The dear one sudden hushed is,
At her own words afraid.
And o'er her eyes her small hands
Are in her terror laid.

The fir-trees louder rustle,
Hums mother's wheel within,
While on his zither father
Keeps up the old tune's din.

" Be not afraid, sweet maiden,
Of mountain sprites malign,

For day and night good angels
Keep watch o'er thee and thine."

Knocks at the cabin window
Fir tree with fingers green ;
The moon, eavesdropper silent,
Pours in its golden sheen.

In bedroom, nigh, soft snoring,
The sire and mother sleep ;
But we, with sweetest prattle,
Each other wakeful keep.

* * * *

THE FISHER-GIRL.

THOU lovely fisher-maiden,
O row thy boat to land,
And let us here together
Sit cooing, hand in hand.

Thy dear head on my bosom
Can fearless pillowed be ;
Thyself thou daily trustest,
Ah ! to the savage Sea !

And like the Sea, my heart, too,
Hath storm and ebb and flow,
And many a fair pearl gleameth
In stilly depths below.

THE FISHERMAN'S HUT.

WITHIN the fisherman's hut we sate,
While darkling heaved the sea in sight,
The mists of evening gradual came
In dimness shrouding shore and height.

At length the kindled lighthouse threw
Out o'er the waves its guiding sheen,
And in the offing far away
A lonely ship could still be seen.

Of storm and shipwreck then we spake;
Of sailor's life and how it blended
Anxiety and joy, and seemed
To be 'twixt earth and sky suspended.

Of far-off alien strands we talked
In tropic glow and northern air,
And of the peoples strange and quaint,
With ways as strange found dwelling there;

Of Ganges' banks, that ever more
Exhale perennial perfume;
Of silent votaries who kneel
Before the Lotus in its bloom.

Of Lapland's unwashed folk, low-browed,
Wide-mouthed, diminutive in size,
Who, crowding round their hearth-fires, bake
Their fishy fare with shrillest cries.

Listened the maid with look demure ;
At length not one of us spake more—
The lonely ship had vanished quite
In darkness veiling sea and shore. *

THE AVOWAL.

WITH twilight glimmer Evening came
Extinguishing the day's red flame,
And wilder grew the ocean's roar,
As sate I lonely on the shore,
And far and wide with sweeping glance
Looked forth upon the waves' wild dance.
My bosom heaved, as heaved the sea,
With homesick yearning, deep for thee,
Whose form of beauty hovers ever
Beside me, wheresoe'er I be ;
Whose sweet low voice is silent never,
But everywhere seems calling me,
In wild wind's whisper, surges' roar,
Its accents haunt me evermore.

* This poem would seem to have suggested to Longfellow his "Fire of Driftwood."

I wrote with fragile cane in hand
"I love thee, Agnes," on the sand,
But foaming, thundering up the strand,
The wicked waves did quick erase
Of my avowal sweet all trace.

O volatile sand and fragile cane,
And mad waves in your restless play
Dissolving all things swift away,
I put no trust in you again,
No more by you can be beguiled.

Sky darker grew, my heart more wild,
When with strong hand, where thickly spire
The forests Vikings hewed of yore,
A stately fir-tree I uptore
And thrust in Etna's throat of fire,
The stateliest fir-tree Norway bore.

With such a giant, fire-tipped pen,
"I love thee, Agnes," wrote I then,
A glowing legend there on high
Upon the ceiling of the sky.

Each night my fiery runes will blaze—
No lapse of time will ere erase
Their brightness, read of every race.
"I love thee, Agnes," still the sky
Will nightly blazon to each eye.

THE QUESTION.

WITH sadness of heart and trouble of brain
A youth mused alone by the desolate main
In the shadow of night—wildly he craves
Response to his soul from the Sea's restless waves.

The riddle of life—resolve it for me,
Mystical, measureless, earth-girding Sea ;
The enigma of life, which pondered in vain,
Has perplexed through the ages many a brain,
Made heads sweat with thought-pangs all the world over,
Whate'er style of hat their thinking might cover,
Caps woven with hieroglyphs, such as of yore
Nile's priesthood and magi of Persia wore,
Or turbans, berretas, perukes—none brought
Unto the problem the requisite thought.

The meaning of man, ah ! might I but know
From you, ye sad waves, that moaningly flow—
Whence comes he, unto what bourne will he go ?
And who dwells aloft, where golden stars glow ?

Murmurs the Sea its chime evermore—
Bloweth the chainless Wind—fly the clouds o'er,
Twinkle the stars apathetic on high,
And he is a fool who expects a reply.

THE Wind draws on its hosen,
Its hose of foamy white,
And till they toss and bellow
The waves its scourges smite.

On darkling heights with fury
Wild pours the rain-gust down—
It is as if the old Night
The Ocean old would drown.

The mast the sea-gull graspeth
With many a raucous cry,
And fluttering all dishevelled
Wreck seems to prophesy.

THE PHŒNIX.

IT comes—a bird that flieth from the West,
Right eastward strain its pinions bright,
To regions of the morning's light.
It yearneth for its Orient garden home,
Whence spicy merchandises come,
Where palms are rustling, zephyr-stirred,
And fountain murmurs cool are heard ;
Thus homeward flying without rest,
This song it sings—the wondrous bird :

" Him loveth she, him loveth she,
And bears his image in her little breast,
His image as a hidden treasure dear,
And knows it not, but in her nightly rest
He stands before her in a vision clear,
His hands she kisses shedding many a tear,
And fondly calleth him by name ;
And calling, wakes and startled lies,
And in her wonder rubs her beauteous eyes.
She knows not what it all may be.
Him loveth she, him loveth she."

Against the mast-tree leaning 't was I heard
The singing of the wondrous bird.
Like steeds swart-green, with manes of silver streaming
The foam-crests of the waves were whitely gleaming ;
As flocks of swans with many a glittering van
For canvas, air-ships white, sail over Helgoland,
Where dwell the nomads of the North Sea's strand ;
So over me the silvery clouds rolled through
The eternal blue,
And flashed the eternal sun,
The rose of heaven and blossom vast of fire,
That mirrored in the sea itself could view,
Heaven, sea, and mine own heart, accordant choir,
In full, melodious unison,
The words re-echoed with our voices three,
Him loveth she, him loveth she.

THE STARS.

I.

IMMOVABLE they stand,
The changeless stars on high,
While in swift flight they see
Millennial years go by.

Immovable they stand,
And on each other rain
Their interblended rays
With love as deep as vain.

Melodious and sweet
Their starry language flows,
But no philologist
Its spheral music knows.

But I their speech have learned,
Naught can its words erase,
For me as grammar served
My sweetheart's beauteous face.

II.

On wings of song a-flying
I bear thee forth, away,
Where Ganges stream is flowing
'Neath lids of Orient day.

To garden red with roses,
In moonlight calm that lies,
The lotos flower awaiteth
Thee there with sleepless eyes ;

The violets kiss and fondle,
Gaze up at stars above,
While roses are narrating
Their fragrant tales of love.

Gazelles in covert lurking
Are bounding to and fro,
While in the distance murmurs
The holy river's flow.

There will we sink together,
Where palm-tree's foliage gleams,
And, love and rest deep drinking,
Lie dreaming happy dreams.

III.

The lotos bloom—it shrinketh
In splendor of the sun,
And with drooped head awaiteth
Night's shadow—dewy, dun.

The moon, that is her lover,
Awakes her from her dreaming.
Her flower face she unveileth
Unto its tender beaming.

She blooms and glows and brightens
Exhaling odorous sigh ;
For love she weeps and trembles
And gazes mute on high.

NIGHT ON THE BEACH.

WITHOUT a star the gloom to cheer
O'er yawning Sea the chill night fell—
The North-wind through its shadows drear
Is breathing many a Runic spell,
Weird legends singing to the waves
And Eddas wild of long ago—
As if in fury, now he raves—
Now croons his notes in accents low.

A sturdy grumbler now he seems—
To humorous mood next changes he—
Anon he madly laughs and screams,
Till leap the waves all wild with glee.
Meanwhile along the level shore
His steps a stranger swiftly urges,
And in his breast a heart he bore
More restless than the winds or surges.

The sea-shells crackle 'neath his tread,
Which striketh many a fiery spark,
As wrapt in mantle gray he sped
With swift strides through the windy dark,

A ray of light with cheering lure
Athwart the gloom beholds he streaming;
The tiny beam with guidance sure
From lonely fisher's hut is gleaming.

While out at sea, her brother, sire
Are tossed upon the stormy water,
Alone to tend the household fire
Remains the fisher's lovely daughter.
Upon the hearth the maiden bright
Sits listening to the kettle singing,
To feed its blaze the brushwood light
She ever and anon is flinging.

Now into sweet relief her face
Is brought, as ruddy flames flash bolder,
And now, in coarse chemise the grace
Of either whitely-rounded shoulder. * * *
The door wide open sudden flies
And night-bound stranger enters there,
Love-smitten straightway rests his eyes
Upon the maid so slender, fair.

Before him standeth she to view,
As lily pallid grows her cheek—
To earth his cloak the stranger threw,
And laughing, thus began to speak:
"I come, my child, as long ago
Came gods in vanished ages, when
Full oft descended they below
To mate with daughters fair of men.

"But stare not thus, sweet child, at me—
Let not my godlike form affright ye—
But, prithee, boil a pot of tea,
And dash it, dear, with *aqua vitæ.*
For out-of-doors 't is passing chill,
The eager night-air keenly blowing—
E'en gods such weather maketh ill,
Catarrhs and rheums, sad gifts, bestowing."

THE LAND OF YOUTH.

For Youth disports in pastures of its own—
No anxious night-thought e'er its breast alarms—
Its easeful hours are fraught with joy alone—
Nor shower, nor storm, nor heat of heaven it harms.
SOPHOCLES.

I 'M a voyager and a pilgrim,
Not to alien strands in sooth,
But in thought I visit often
Pleasant fields of vanished Youth.

By the light of memory guided,
As the sailor by his star,
Backward through the Past's dim vistas,
Journey I in thought afar;

To life's Morning-land I travel,
O'er a waste of weary years,
See again the pleasant faces
Of my Youthtime's buried peers.

Morning's dew still pearl-like glistens
On the verdure of that land—
Health and vigor there inhale I
From the matin breezes bland.

All things, as they were, remain there—
Saddens not the heart one change—
From Youth's uplands can the vision
Over glorious prospects range.

Far-off mountains' skylike azure—
Vales with pastoral peace profound—
And the gleam of domes and steeples
On the far horizon's round.

Standing there in thought again I
See the world, as 't was in youth,
When I deemed that at Life's banquet
I had come to stay in truth.

When I deemed that Death for others
Was and not at all for me—
When a glorious May-bloom purpled
Whatsoe'er my eyes could see.

Standing on Youth's uplands thus I,
'Mid a long-dead youthful band,
See again the future stretching
Like a sunset vista grand :

Golden mountains, happy islands
In the purple of the west—
All things in the earth and heaven
In the tints of faerie drest.

Strains of mighty poets thrill me,
As they thrilled me long ago—
And again sweet lips and faces
Make me bliss of love to know.

But this dream of Youth soon over
Leaves me sadly to repine ;
For Youth is intoxication
In itself and without wine :

'T is a glowing dream, illusion
Steeping common earth in light—
It is genius, inspiration,
And ineffable delight.

Health and beauty are its minions—
Then are brightest sense and soul—
Earth is an Alcina's garden,
O'er which seasons cloudless roll.

While it lasts all things enduring
Permanent and real seem,
And we laugh at old saws calling
Life a shadow and a dream.

Round us blooms a grove of kindred,*
All our friends are fresh and fair ;
Full of boundless hope we build then
Gorgeous castles in the air.

Solitude we seek full often
O'er our thoughts that we may brood,
Noonday reverie in lonely places,
Pine-embowered, where none intrude.

From the wreck of hopes, endeavors,
That our later lives must know,
From amid the graves of dear ones,
Sadly back our glance we throw,

To the happy world of Youthtime,
To the morning's red and dew,
When like us the earth and heaven
Seemed just fashioned fresh and new ;

When upon no graves we stumbled—
Knew the breathing world alone—
Only heard life's festal music.
Undepressed by sign or moan ;

World of dear familiar faces,
And unbroken kindred ties,
More and more in dim past fading,
As the swift hour o'er us flies,

* "A grove of kindred" is an expression borrowed from Wordsworth.

Will there be at length renewal
Of the joys, hopes, loves you gave?
Will there be of youth revival
In some land beyond the grave?

Pleasant 't is at times to visit
Old haunts, where one's boyhood sprung,
'Mid life's evening shadows musing
Where we dreamed when we were young.

Prizes of success no longer
Have the charm they used to wear,
With Youth's health and fresh emotions,
Fame or wealth can ne'er compare.

Tenure frail by which we hold them
Makes life's prizes poor, indeed,
Even of the brightest genius
Lethe is at last the meed.

Loud and all-absorbing Present
More and more disdains the Past,
O'er our later lives its shadows
By the tomb are darkly cast.

We are pilgrims travelling whither?
Towards some fabled better land,
Which the bards and saints and sages
Have beheld in visions grand?

TO A. L. R.

A POET thee in other years did love :
Thy face was starlight to his fervid dreams,
And of thy morning charms still sunset gleams
Attest how potent was the spell they wove
Around thy glorious minstrel's lonely heart.
Thee in his deathless verse he did enshrine,
Thy name embalmed in many a burning line,
And of his wide renown give thee a part.
Long since were broke his heart and fitful lyre
By adverse fate ; his threne long since was sung.
But more and more in every clime and tongue,
His fame is spread, which owns the poet's fire ;
While still thou charm'st e'en though no longer young,
As when thy minstrel's soul thou did'st inspire.

TO MRS. HARRIET P. S.

I.

SWEET poetry, the exhalation sweet
Of a most lovely soul, bears far thy name,
But thou than any verse that gives thee fame,
A finer poem art, than e'er on feet
Melodious was hailed with wide acclaim.

The scribe, renowned himself, is often tame,
Whom disillusioned his admirers meet,
Because close seen he hath nor charm nor flame.
But thou a peerless lady art—of yore
The errant knight bowed low to such as thee
With deepest reverence on bended knee,
To dauntless valor nerved for evermore.
Your lyre and pen, potential though they be,
Are scarce remembered, when yourself we see.

II.

Like Lady of Shalott thou art embowered—
  In river-girdled isle * like her abiding.
A magic web she wove all richly flowered,
  While down to Camelot the stream was gliding.
The textiles, which thou weav'st, are of the brain,
  With blossoms of imagination richly wrought.
The ripple of the River in thy strain
  And Ocean's scents are on the breezes brought.
A glorious environment of sky
  And sea and stream and pine-plumed shores are
    thine,
Where Night and Day feed full the poet's eye,
  And Morn and Sunset at their fairest shine.
Thou art a new-world Sappho, and to thee
  Thy mate might, if he chose, Alcæus be.

* Deer Island, Merrimack River.

COCKAIGNES.

DEATH, toil, and penury, and pain
Make mortal life a serious thing,
Which else were frivolous and vain :
They are its salt, its seasoning.

The lands of ease, which poets feign,
Which ploughless yield the golden grain,
Are fictions of luxurious brain.
The soul their *idlesse* would disdain.
Not rest, but motion, is its mood,
Ascent to higher altitude.

ODORS.

MOODS of ourselves these odors rare,
Which seem to haunt the outer air,
Only the dust of flowers is there.
Spiced airs may blow and censers swing
And breathe the balmy breath of spring;
They only viewless atoms bring
In Sense's portal to be strewed,
Fragrance is soul's ambrosial mood.

Insentient Nature joyless, dark,
Awaits the spirit's kindling spark.
Her swift vibrations beat in vain
Unless they reach the sentient brain.
Light, music, odor then are born
Investing solitude forlorn.
Brain is the spirit's living strand,
'Gainst which ethereal surges pour ;
A fivefold intonation grand
Resounds along that mystic shore !

Pursue the weird analysis
And even Nature spirit is.
Her forces to fixed ends confined
Relentless-seeming, dark and blind
Are fulgurations of the Eternal mind.
In far perspective melt, I wis,
The rock-ribbed hills to folds of mist.
No fabled *hyle* dull and dead
Is choking space, but in its stead
Rushes and foams the stream of might
Forever full and infinite ;
The galaxies like sands of gold
Are in its torrent sparkling rolled.

A LEAF OF CYPRESS.

IN MEMORIAM M. B.

FAR eastward swells a lone sepulchral mound,
And there my youthtime's sweetheart bright is sleeping
An unawakening slumber, while around
Bewail her dark-leaved pines and night-dews weeping.

Amid her dust perchance a single tress,
Survival sole of mouldered loveliness,
Some of its whilom gloss may yet be keeping.
Not all the years, that o'er me have been sweeping,
Have thought of her steeped in forgetfulness,—

E'en now, when wild Eolian night-winds blow,
Through Dreamland's gates into the long-ago,
Where roses of perpetual May-time grow,
Adown the silent ways of sleep I go
And there amid the far past's green domain
My buried sweetheart clasp I once again,
Still sitting in the old familiar room,
Demure, unchanged in all her maiden bloom.
No grain of grave dust in her hair is seen
That twines her forehead with its old-time sheen,—

While seems to glow upon my lips her breath
Obtrudes on me no sombre thought of death,
As close and fond we *tête-à-tête* once more,
Seem sitting as in golden days of yore,
Till gently touched by morning's luminous hand
I sadly wake outside of fairyland.

BIRDS OF PASSAGE.

SUNWARD and southward they 've flitted away,
In the bright zone of palms they are playing;
In heavens of blue and summer's glad ray
From the north wind afar they are straying.

In those regions of sunshine they 'll linger,
Until spring to these orchards returning,
From the Cross of the South back shall bring her
Gay truants, where the North-star is burning.

E'en in climes of the sun, with their splendor
Of ether and bloom, the magnet of home
Draweth still with attraction most tender
The pilgrim in youth lured southward to roam.

Thus in spring from the sunlands are flying
Swallows and bluebirds, o'er islands and seas ;
To the dim, pallid North they are hieing,
To far native orchards, gardens, and trees.

DOMUS NYMPHARUM.

HOUSE of the nymphs, fair fable beings fled,
But still the glamor wild of forest shades,
Of silent, sylvan, dim arcades
And oxygen of hemlock and of pine,
Whose night-dark boughs perennial twilight shed,
E'en when the summer noontides fiercest shine,
Awake the thought of care-free lives in idlesse spent
In sylvan merriment,
Of Rosalind in Ardennes green,
Of Robin Hood amid his archers keen,
Of woodmen and woodcutters strong,
Who make the mountain gorges ring,
While 'neath their strokes the trees are quivering,
Who lead longeval lives with priceless wealth
Of buoyant, primitive health,
Such health as did to faun-men old belong.
Medicinal boughs the pine trees wave,
And in their bracing ether calm,
Odorous with subtle, resinous balm,
Hygeia finds an ever-grateful home,
With canopy of needled leaves for dome,
And with a dim, crepuscular daylight grave.
What though the Dryads beautiful have flown,
Still mystic is the hush of forests lone,
As when the pipe of Pan was heard
And boughs with shouts of Dian's train were stirred.

Bronzed with the sunset's farewell gleams,
Or glorified with morning's red,
Or sultry with midsummer's steams,
The tranquil forests still allure,
Still wake the thought of golden ages fled,
Of loves and lives Arcadian, pure,
Of festal, primitive tribes beneath the shade
Of woods Hesperian by old Saturn swayed.

LOVE AND TEMPEST.

Quam juvat immites ventos audire cubantem
Et dominam tenero detinuisse sinu.—TIBULLUS.

'TIS sweet in the lone night, when tempests rave
Without, the loved one to the heart to fold,
Which deeper bliss, fruition cannot crave,
For none more perfect comes to mortal mould.
The storm the warmth of love more downy makes
In double night of darkness, tempest wild ;
Which though it walls and turrets rudely shakes
Harms not the lovers in their bliss inisled.
Where e'en the sighs are pleasure's breathings deep
And kisses, what the heart would tell, express,
And downy-plumed and honey-dewed soft sleep
Folds them in embrace close of tenderness.
Wail, night wind, while they dream, and rain-drops weep,
Your sobs their lids in balmier slumbers steep.

LINES.

A FEW fresh flakes of wintry snow,
'T is true my unthinned locks bestrow,
Whilst thou, by whom my heart is rent,
All May-bloom art and lilac scent.
Breathes round thee, darling, soft and low,
Of youth the violet-perfumed wind ;
Again I feel my bosom glow
With dreams I thought were left behind.
But ah ! 't will never fade nor die—
Love's passionate idolatry.
Where blooms a form as fair as thine
He buildeth, as of old, his shrine !

One kiss from thee and I am young—
My heart re-youthed, my nerves re-strung !
The burden of the palsying years
Falls off, dissolves, and disappears.
The gates of Dawn re-opening show
An orient heaven with roseate glow.

Then let me breathe, in softest strain,
Into thine ear my fond heart's pain,
While from mine eyes the sweet tears rain.
Recall me from the slopes of time
Back to the morning's heights sublime,

Thy love has power, if it is mine—
It is? Then stars propitious shine;
I crave no more, no deeper bliss,
Than thou canst lavish with a kiss!

CORINNE—CONSUELO.

SWEET sister Pleiades! together now
Your beams you mingle in the heaven of fame,
Immortal radiance conjoined you throw
From starry heights, where all men you acclaim.
Rejoice Corinne! in loneliness so long
Insphered; a sister-planet mounts at last
In triumph, girt with light and song,
Henceforth with thine her equal rays to cast.
Starred tress of Berenice, shine no more,
And, Crown of Ariadne, hide your fire!
At length your constellated reign is o'er,
A brighter cluster joins the starry choir.
Corinne, Consuelo, mingled splendors shed,
Henceforth the vesper-planets of the dead!

UTOPIAS.

THE breeze of hope for ever blows; afar,
Through vistas of the future, ever shine
Cities of God and commonwealths divine,
Happy Utopias with gates ajar,

Where all men free and equal brothers are,
And life is easy, without aught to mar
Its hours of bliss, and love and friendship twine
Immortal wreaths, and nectar flows for wine.

There grace and beauty are each woman's dower,
And brains and wealth are lavished upon all,
So that no citizen to want is thrall.
Perpetual spring, with dewy grass and flower,
There paves the Elysian soil, and sun and shower
Weave rainbows, while no tempests ever lower.

FOREIGN TRAVEL.

THE vast sky dwarfeth all below,
That man has reared or earth can show:
Then wherefore wander to and fro?
Mount, minster, pyramid, and sea
Are trivial matched with cosmic space
And pomp of worlds which night displays:
Then wherefore bird of passage be?
In every land, the stir and strife
Are for the bread that feedeth life:
One spot, one people, teacheth all
The lore of this terrestrial ball.

The relics of the past are vain:
The haughty palace, pillared fane,
Cemented were with human blood,
And bestial keep the multitude.

Lone prairie of the unploughed West,
That poor man welcomes to its breast
With wheaten plenty, land and home,
Is fairer spot than storied Rome.
The old states moulder into dust
With all their pomp of palace, shrine,
And sceptred sway by right divine,
Because to man they are unjust.
What though the golden prairie flower
Blooms not amid superb decay?
The rising, not the fallen tower
It perfumes,—structures of to-day:
For people, not for priest or king,
Their doors unfold, their arches spring.

SUNRISE.

WITH sudden flash behold the sun
New-risen intensely burning,
To glorious Cosmos once again
Night's formless chaos turning!
His blinding splendor flows abroad
In mighty inundation:
What wonder that the primal man
Bent low in adoration,
As if he heard ring in his ear
The fiat of creation?

Apocalypse more grand, august,
To prophet ne'er was given,
When, into awful vistas oped,
He saw the future riven,

The misty mountain-tops and vales
With Memnon-strains seem sounding
To hymn day's luminary vast
Once more old night confounding.

THE AUGUST CRICKET.

FINAL month of fervid summer,
Pleasant are thy latter days;
Foretaste of the autumn have we
In thy mitigated rays.

Sweet it is to sit and listen
By one's hearth-stone all alone,
Basking in the dewy moonshine,
To the cricket's monotone.

Ah, how often have I listened
In how many years now fled
To that weird, incessant murmur
With the clear moon overhead!

And once more the old note soundeth
In this latest of the years,
While I think that most have vanished
Of my youthtime's friends and peers.

Me the coming, going seasons
In this breathing world still find,
Bloom of spring and heat of summer
And the winter's bitter wind.

But though pensive with emotions,
Such as long experience brings,
Still the old spell feel I working,
When the August cricket sings.

When the thistle-down is floating
Down the shining tides of air,
And departing summer showeth
In her final days most fair.

THE TEUTON.

THE servile creed of dreamers old,
Who idled 'neath a Syrian sun,
Was suited not to Teuton bold,
Though o'er him sway it strangely won.

Despite his alien cult, he turned
To smiter's hand no craven cheek,—
At wrong with indignation burned,
To taunt and insult ne'er was meek.

Spare fast was never to his mood,
But copious draught and liberal cheer:
He prayed not for his daily food,
But gathered it with toil severe.

The soil and climate of his birth
Brooked not the idle, saintly drone;
But wintry storm and rugged earth
To thrift and skill were kind alone.

The oak and ash-tree gave him shade,
To mast and oars he hewed the pine,
And boldly drifted south to raid
On regions of the palm and vine.

His heaven was a heroes' hall
Of revel after conflict grim,
Which duly ceased, as twilight's fall
Wrapped Asgard in its shadows dim.

THE POET AND THE RIVER.

Poet.

YOUR banks are always full,
O valley-gladdening River,
Though in the sea your stream
Is disappearing ever.
The tide of life which runs
My arteries along,
With every lapsing year
I feel less swift and strong.
Who feeds your swelling flood,
As brimmingly it flows,
So that, though ever spent,
Exhaustion ne'er it knows?

River.

I mediate between
The Mountain and the Sea,
The sunset-reddened heights
Purveyors are for me.

They milk the clouds, which fold
  Their summits lone and high,
And thus the upland urn,
  Whence spring I, ne'er is dry.
Though at my mouth I lavish
  My waters on the Sea,
No wastefulness, unthrift
  Is chargeable to me;
My ocean-drunk deposit
  Great Nature pays again
In inland-wafted largess
  Of clouds and dew and rain;
Of clouds, which steeped in sunset
  In gold and purple lie,
Like Islands of the Happy,
  Along the evening sky;
In rain, which feeds my fountain,
  My watershed on high,
With such a vaporous bounty,
  Its basin ne'er is dry.

Poet.

Not thus with me does Nature,
  The mighty mother, deal,
Replenishing the vigor
  Which swift years from me steal.
My vital current runneth
  An ever-shrinking tide,
As over me the Seasons
  In fleet succession glide.

THE REVOLUTION.

THERE is no pause. Still blow resounds on blow,
The order old making to shake and reel
From base to pinnacle. To dust brought low,
Crescent and Cross the shock of ruin feel.
Shallow Reaction tries in vain to stem
The Revolution's surge, which more and more,
Drowning tiara, throne, and diadem,
Spreads undulating wide from shore to shore.
What though Priest, Kaiser, Sultan, King still sit
Sceptred and crowned above the encroaching flood?
Belshazzar's legend over them is writ,
And they grow pale before Man's altered mood.
Voices of Revolution, trumpet-clear,
Byron and Shelley, lo, your day is near!

PYGMALION.

THE myth tells how the sculptor old
Ideal beauty sought,
And, chiselling the marble cold,
A radiant image wrought:
How, when the work consummate stood,
In all its carven charms,

He loved it, and his statue wooed
With fondly clasping arms.

Love's goddess saw his passion warm,
And, by her special grace,
Enkindled was the sculptured form
To life in his embrace:
The stony cheeks with blushes burned,
The lips gave back his kiss;
The marble maid to flesh was turned,
And felt a mutual bliss.

Thus Genius, spurred by strong desire,
Creative might can wield;
Make e'en insensate rock respire,
And stubborn Nature yield.
What though the thought with which it glows
Awakes the dull crowd's scorn?
No chill of doubt its clear faith knows,
Of quenchless ardor born.

A living thing at last behold
The dream it cherished long;
A might that can the world re-mould,
And hush the jeering throng.
The Amathusian legend hoar
Was thus no fable vain,
But pregnant with a precious lore
For glowing heart and brain.

TEDIUM VITÆ.

"The thing that has been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done; and there is no new thing under the sun."—*Ecclesiastes.*

ON earth's surface, Mother Nature,
We have dwelt for many a year,
Weary of thy repetitions,
Yearn we for another sphere.
Travelling same unvarying circuit,
Blooming only to decay,
Constantly thyself renewing,
Tir'st thou guests too long who stay.

Come and go thy wonted seasons
In a swift-revolving round.
Death and birth and light and darkness
Alternating still are found.
Leafage of the jocund springtime
Autumn quickly turneth sere,
Fruitage of the tawny summer
Tides us over winter drear.

What is all this iteration
But a tale told o'er and o'er?
Still it ends in dull renewal
Of the same things evermore.

Blue sky, stars, and far-off mountains
Grand emotions in us stir;
But, to humble us, low instincts
And low daily wants recur.

What if after many æons
Reachest thou a higher plane?
We shall, then, unsightly fossils
In some dark crypt long have lain.
Say, beyond the grave's dim portal
Us does higher life await?
To a changeless, grand hereafter,
Art thou vestibule and gate?

Useless 't is for us, mute Mother,
Thee to question or arraign:
Busy with thy countless functions,
Thou wilt answer never deign.
Inn for fleeting generations
Rolleth earth about the sun:
Never-ending, still-beginning,
'T is a race that ne'er is run.

THE PALM AND THE PINE.

Palm—
My shaftlike stem uplifts its foliage high,
Pine—
My leaves are lyres, that in the noontide sigh.

Palm—
I waved of old, where primal cities sprung,
Pine—
I first of trees the sea spray from me flung.
Palm—
The desert lion oft beneath me roars,
Pine—
O'er bear and moose my trunk columnar soars.
Palm—
The Southern Cross high over palm-land gleams,
Pine—
The North's aurora weird above me streams.
Palm—
In solitary state I love to grow,
Pine—
In forests vast, I noonday twilight throw.
Palm—
O'er lonely desert wells I sentry stand,
Pine—
Blue lakes and rivers vein my fatherland.
Palm—
My shadow over weary wastes is cast,
Pine—
My terebinthine green no cold can blast.
Palm—
A stately landmark firm, unmoved I stand,
Pine—
A sail-clad mast, I 'm blown from strand to strand.
Palm—
Unnumbered uses 'neath my beauty hide,
Pine—
Adventurous through storm and shine I glide.

Palm—
I over Nile and warbling Memnon grew,
Pine—
Spiring aloft I sing in ether blue.
Palm—
Your Northmen sought of old my softer zone,
Pine—
Its airs astray oft make my leafage moan.
Palm—
I dream of thee 'mid splendors of the line,
Pine—
And I for thee on northern mountains pine.

TO THE MOON.

The moon seems to be already thoroughly refrigerated.
JOHN FISKE.

FRET of life, they say is o'er
On thy lone and frozen shore.
Zephyrs there no longer blow,
Rivers long have ceased to flow ;
All thine ocean-beaches are
Surfless, soundless, gaunt, and bare ,
Through thy clods have ceased to beat
Pulses of the vernal heat ;
Sterile sameness chill and drear
Rolls around thy fruitless year ;
Summer, Spring, and Autumn flown
Winter leave to reign alone.

Spent volcanoes, yawning vast,
Tell of dire convulsions past;
Entrails fused and boiling o'er,
Mining all thy fiery core;
Robbing thee of central glow
Till nor blade nor leaf can grow
Vesting with its green the sere,
Abysmal horrors of thy sphere,
Where the eye surveys aghast
Nought but scoriac, stricken waste,
Waveless beds of vanished seas
Left forlorn of storm and breeze;
Cataracts without a sound
Plunging into gulfs profound,
O'er whose dizzy edge no more
Rainbows shine nor torrents roar;
Caverns scooped to central gloom,
Vaults Plutonian, pits of doom.

Vestal Queen wert thou of old—
Quivered huntress chaste and cold,
Wearing on thy forehead bright
Crescent-curve of dewy light,
Haunting still the forest wild,
Still by passion unbeguiled.
Antlered stags before thee sprung,
Glade and thicket blithely rung.
Many-shrined and many-named
Thee the tribes of yore acclaimed,
When with plenilunar sheen,
Kindling Asian skies serene,

Whence thou didst with joy behold
Ephesos in incense rolled,
Fuming from thy fane of gold.

Shrineless, prayerless, roll'st thou now,
Hear'st no virgin's murmured vow ;
Clamors wild from barbarous lips,
When thine orb its splendor dips
In the twilight of eclipse.
In the earth's vast shadow hung
Like a lantern thou art swung,
While through interstellar air
Glideth she, a sky-ship fair,
Voyaging in elliptic gyre
Round the Sun's imperial fire !

AROMAS.

I.

THE TORCHBEARERS.

I SEE them stand anear, afar,
Lone-shining through the backward years.
Long interspace 'twixt star and star
Down wastes of vanished time appears.

For, even in history's blackest night,
Some martyr torch of reason bore ;
And, ere he fell, its sacred light
To younger son of truth passed o'er.

II.

VIRGIN SOIL.

Stateless and churchless your acreage lone
Ne'er was crimsoned with blood for a mitre or
throne,
Nor are ruinous columns over you strown.
More fair for their absence, your verdurous waste
With prairie flowers sweet and long grass is graced,
Where states of the future free, chainless, may rise,
O'erarched by the blue of fathomless skies.

III.

SLEEP.

Sweet sleep is strenuous struggle's meed.
No downy plumage will it win
For Sybarite immersed in sin.
Such dainty lure 't will never heed,
But quickly hies the boon to bless
The couch of honest weariness.

IV.

LIFE'S BOARD.

The viands on life's table are
Not meant for a perpetual fare :
After a time they lose their zest,
The board belongs to later guest.

TO BYRON AND ALFIERI.

MATCHED with the dainty Sybarites of song,
Who now strum idle lays, having their brows
With lotus-fillets bound, O virile Souls!
Ye grandly loom athwart the lurid haze
Of Revolution, from whose dugs ye drew
The fiery milk of freedom. Italia,
In her recovered unity, grateful
Enwreathes your marble effigies with bays
Perennially green. Ye sang her as
No other bards had sung, the light of all
Her ages flashing full upon your souls.

* * * * * *

Enfranchised Hellas, too,
Brings wreaths of immemorial laurel
From Dorian gorges, where it first upsprung,
To shade your marble temples with their bloom.

HANNIBAL.

ONCE Afric was avenged; her Punic chief
Brought haughty Europe to her knees of yore,
Till, surfeited with victory, he forbore
To bring her proudest state to final grief,
And seat of empire change to Libya's shore.

He was the subtlest strategist that e'er
Steep'd battle-stricken earth in foeman's gore;
Fertile in wiles, though keen his sword and spear,
His intellect was keener far, as dull Rome knew
Bending in anguish o'er her noblest slain,
Caught in the net of Carthaginian brain.
Would he had crushed her, ere to might she grew!
Clearer would history's turbid stream have run,
If prompt as puissant had been Hamilcar's son.

TO EMILIO CASTELAR.

IBERIAN Land, entrenched behind
  Thy ridges Pyrenean,
One son thou hast whose pen can bring
  Fire from the Empyrean!
From thy swart, olive-cinctured loins
  He burst to gild decadence;
Not since Cervantes has there flashed
  From thee such genial radiance.

But scarce to her this star belongs,
  Old Spain, the semi-savage;
He chooses exile, even now,
  To shun guerilla ravage
And advent of the puny king,
  Son of a Messalina,
'Neath whom his land once more becomes
  The bigot's dull arena

Son of the fierce and fickle South,
Who at the cloudy portals
Of German thought dost stand to make
It clear to wildered mortals,—
Hyperion-like dispersest thou
The mists and vapors folding
Its far and icy peaks, adown
Whose sides glad streams are rolling

To make a brighter flora spring,
Where'er their moisture sallies,
And call a fresher verdure forth
From all the plains and valleys.
Thy genius is a complex of
Levantine fire and splendor,
Irradiating thought profound
From Deutschland dark and tender.

It gleams with light of Grecian seas,
Where isles of Summer blossom;
'T is dark with Baltic's swell, which rolls
The amber from its bosom ;
All times and climes to thee are known,
Their glory and their shadow,—
Thou dashest o'er thy magic page
The tints of Eldorado !

ULTIMA ÆTAS.

RENEWED, at length, the whole round earth
Shall bear a fairer fauna,
And perfect races, larger browed,
Shall with their works adorn her!
Building no more the bigot's shrine,
And piles ecclesiastic,
But Academes where Truth can show,
Unveiled, her face majestic!

To young and old, to man and maid,
To all the happy people
Grovelling no more in homage to
The Cross and Parish steeple;
Then shall begin the order New,
Unfolding grander ages,
Needing no more historic pens,
But only Bards and Sages,—

Hierophants of Truth to lead
To vistas, brighter, greener,
Wherein the nations unified
Shall breathe a breath serener;
And roaming through the fields of air
Have wider scope and margin,
Not tenants of a few trite spots,
But all their bounds enlarging,

Cosmopolites of Earth and Sky,
Through morn and sunset sailing,
O'erlooking continents and isles,
While heights ethereal scaling.
Then, old strait-lacings of the past
Shall all be burst and riven,
And creeds and dogmas to the winds
Like threshed-out chaff be given !

Then, Love shall be celestial fire,
Not merely pottage boiling,
Its torch to kindle at the beck
Of Church and State recoiling ;
But lambent lightning of the heart,
Round youth and beauty playing,
The Satyr's hoof no more amid
Its fruits and blossoms straying.
The hymn of Love shall be upraised
Beneath the lamp of Hesper,
And youths and virgins purer vows
In softer moonlight whisper !

OCEAN.

ARENA of the winds it to and fro
Ripples or rages at their fitful breath—
O'er its wild acreage the tempests mow
Harvests of devastation, wreck, and death ;

Yet noblest races ever felt the air
Of ocean lure them with a mystic spell—
Far, fortunate, fabled isles could make them dare
To launch adventurous on its briny swell.

Lone-musing on its strand in summer days,
Far off the spectral sails of voyagers old,
Dim-gliding, 'mid the horizon's magic haze,
We seem with fancy's vision to behold.
The great old marts of traffic, Corinth, Tyre,
Miletos, Carthage, Gades, Venice, seem
With galleons and galleys thronged in fire
Of oceanic sunset red to gleam.

Desert of storm and shine, of water, air,
Welters the ocean-world from zone to zone—
Flashes its surf on tropic islands fair,
Girdles with mystery arctic regions lone.
Not all man's argosies, that plough its brine
In current years, sail-clad or vapor-driven,
With keels innumerable from pole to line
Him empire o'er its tameless waves have given.

Earth like a mother spreads her bosom green,
Foodful, flower-spangled, firm beneath his tread,
Grows through his culturing hand a blissful scene,
And in her embrace softly folds his dead.
But ocean keeps no trace of oar or sail.
Between him and its sunless gulfs man feels
His stanchest ribs of oak are vain and frail,
Uncertain of their ports his fleetest keels.

Remorseless depths unfathomed, restless might,
  Which saps e'en continents by slow degrees,
Make sense of awe and peril chase delight,
  So swift to tempest swells the ocean's breeze.
Like some vast beast it bellows on its strand,
  Breathing in moaning respirations deep,
Its misty distances in circles grand
  'Twixt ever new horizons spread and sweep.

The ocean valley is the cistern vast,
  Wherein all rivers, streams, and streamlets flow—
They from their mountain watersheds make haste,
  Their tribute in his briny fisc to throw.
His boiling wells of tepid water bear
  Fertility to many a northern strand;
His saline vapors freshen earth and air;
  His wave-cooled winds are welcome to the land.

The sun his moisture weaves in airy loom
  High over upland, meadow, valley, plain;
The vernal shower, that makes earth's verdure bloom,
  He sends, father of cloud and dew and rain.
His billows trained to freedom men of old,
  The merchant-commonwealths of Hellas fair;
Where'er his midland sea its surges rolled
  Dauntless autonomy was in the air.

The realm of movement, ocean's winds and waves,
  Made races migrant in the foretime dim;

Leaving behind ancestral fields and graves,
To fairer coasts in triremes stanch they swim.
To Homer ocean was a mighty stream,
A vast, deep-running river girdling earth,
Whence rising sun, stars flashed with brighter beam,
Whose ambient slime to men and things gave birth.

SCIENTIFIC TRUTH.

THE scriptures of eternal space,
Grown legible unto our race,
Have made the sacred canon vain—
We need not turn its leaves again.

SLEEP.

UPON the night-side of the planet, Sleep,
With poppied wand, o'erpowers the weary race,
Strows them in mimic death o'er half earth's face.
Helpless and purposeless supine they lie,
With features steeped in slumber's idiocy ;
Then yawn the cosmic spaces starred, profound ;
In their sidereal depths there is no sound ;
Eternal night in awful, mystic gleams,
From countless stars and constellations streams.
The awed earth slowly rolls, with noiseless gyre,
Seas, lands, again into auroral fire,
Rousing to upright attitude of life
The tribes of men to wage their petty strife.

DÆDALUS.

'T WAS arrogance deemed of old for mechanist
Nature to supple to the use of man,
Copying the skill of mathematic bee,
Hydraulic beaver, and the weaving-birds ;
Fire was a theft from jealous deity ;
Its utilizer suffered martyrdom
Nailed to a mountain crag. Art was malign
And impious, and old religion placed
Beneath its ban Cainite and Dædalid.
At length the theologic curse is spurned,
And man, the artist and contriver, wields
The cosmic forces to the noblest ends.
There yet will be a Dædalus whose skill
Will make the empty air a thoroughfare.
Mechanic genius served perforce of old
The sullen despot, wrought his enginery
Of torture, bulls of bronze, his labyrinths,
Whose clueless mazes were the baffling lairs
Of bestial lust, demoniac cruelty.
When Archimedes planned, war was the trade
Of human kind. Now peace is paramount,
And the inventor serves the general weal.

EUGENIE.*

I.

THOU hast been long discrowned, but sadder far
The charm of other days, which was thine own,
And scarcely borrowed lustre from the throne
It won thee, leaves thee now a fallen star
In rayless, dull eclipse, dejected, lone.
If beauty's sceptre in thy grasp had staid,
And still thy form, as erst, was lithe and fair,
As huntress Dian's carved in Parian stone,
Thy lot would not be dark with flat despair.
Bends not from heaven the stainless Mother-Maid
Unto her sad Iberian votary's moan?
Alas, you found her but a thing of air,
A doleful phantom, powerless to stay
The stroke of doom which left thee fallen, gray.

II.

But *now* than ravished sceptre, diadem,
And withered loveliness, a loss more deep
Doth from thy widowed arms forever sweep
The flower of the Napoleonic stem,

* The above poem was written at the time of the death in Zululand of the son of Napoleon Third and Eugenie.

Its sole and latest hope, thine only born.
O crownless mother, dolorous, forlorn!
When at the summit of imperial pride,
With dew of youth, like matin star you shone,
E'en on that morn, when cannons' roar made known
Your pangs were ended, and your Cæsar's throne
By advent of a man-child fortified—
You deemed not then 't were better to have died.
How could you see far-off this fatal hour,
When desolation is your only dower?

"MONSTRARI DIGITO."

E'EN Horace once unknown and poor
Drew not the public eye;
Of vision dim and stature short
Unmarked men passed him by.
Indignant oft he owns himself,
By tooth of envy gnawed,
To see and hear a stupid world
Its favorites applaud.
Immortal genius glowed within
His minimum of clay,
Through all obstructions bursting forth
It brightened into day.
The farmer of the Sabine hills,
Descending from his home,
Beheld himself the focus of
The eyes of mighty Rome.
The pointed finger plainly said:
"Behold the bard you seek!

The Roman lyre he striketh as
Alcæus struck the Greek."

"A little man—a freedman's son"—
"E'en so, but that is naught,
Divus Augustus nods to him,
The Seeker, not the Sought!
The lord of legions knows the lyre
Of genius rings afar
Through space and time, e'en Cæsar's fame
Potent to make or mar!"

Thus from his shell the poet burst,
Full-fledged with pinion strong;
Proudly he flew an eagle's flight
Master of Roman Song,
Emerged to light he revelled in
The unbounded air and sun;
Perennius ære—sure enough
The mighty name he won.
The flight of ages, countless years
His genius has defied.
E'en his large boast was less than truth,—
He has not wholly died.
Fame is the spur of noble minds,
The noblest of them said,
A weakness sure to toil to live
In others' breath when dead:
When into fiery mist again
All life and thought shall pass,
For earth's illustrious there will be
An amnesty *en masse.*

Oblivion then will glut her maw
With oldest, brightest fames ;
For want of memory will be forgot
E'en Homer's, Shakespeare's names !

TRANSLATIONS FROM HORACE.

TO DELLIUS.

[Book II., Ode 3.]

I.

SINCE to death your nature dooms you,
You will calmly face your lot—
Triumph will not o'er-elate you,
Hard disaster scare you not.
Naught is lasting, joy nor sorrow—
All our mortal moods soon end ;
Thus a level head and spirit
Best befit us, O my friend.

II.

Whether you your life in sadness
Shall have passed, it matters not,
Or with old Falernian mellow
Revelled in some grassy spot.
Death to mourner and to feaster
Comes alike to close the scene.
Equal to whate'er betides us
Let us live with souls serene.

III.

Where the stately pine and poplar
Love to weave a social shade,
And by brook obliquely running
Murmurous melody is made,
Bid your servitors bring thither,
Where in shadow you repose,
Wine and unguents and sweet blossoms
Of the too brief-blooming rose.

IV.

Bid them hasten, ere the Sisters
Dusky threads of fate have spun.
While your age knows naught of waning
And rejoices you the sun.
Lordly mansions, woods, and pastures
You will surely leave behind,
And your hoarded wealth new owner
At your exit instant find.

V.

Matters not our grade, possessions,
Lowly born or long-descended—
We are victims all of Orcus
When the light of life is ended.
To eternal exile going
Down the same dark route all fare—
O'er the dim Styx ferried all are
Undistinguished shadows there.

TO LUCIUS SEXTUS.

[Book I., Ode 4.]

MELTS the harsh, chill winter feeling,
Sweet vicissitude of spring;
'Neath the west wind softly breathing,
Golden wheat is blossoming.
Shoreward drags his keel the sailor,
Flocks in stalls no more delight,
Quits his fireside now the ploughman,
Meads with frost no more are white.

'Neath the overhanging moon now
Venus leads her dancing train;
Hand in hand with nymphs the Graces
Tread their mazy round again,
Glowing Vulcan lights his forges,
Wreath of myrtle wears each brow,
In the groves to jolly Faunus,
Lamb or kid is offered now.

Pallid Death with foot impartial
Knocks alike at palace, cot;
Life's brief span vain expectations
Clearly bids us cherish not.
Soon the night will gather round you,
Where the fabled Manes be—

Soon the shadowy house of Pluto
'Mong its shadows number thee.

There such wine as here you 're quaffing
Shall your spectral lips not know ;
There with sweet desire you ne'er shall
As in upper daylight glow.

TO MELPOMENE.

WHOM, Melpomene, thou heedest
At his birth with looks benign,
At heroic games he will not
By his feats of prowess shine.

Chariot race nor martial triumph
Him a victor shall display,
Wearing proudly wreath of conquest,
Leafage of Apollo's bay.

But thick-foliaged grove and river,
Which in quiet flows along,
Him with sweetest inspiration
Famed shall make in lyric song.

Now that Rome, the queen of cities,
Owneth me a poet, too,
Wounds me less the tooth of envy,
Than erewhile 't was wont to do.

Muse, the dulcet din, who swayest
Of the golden lyric shell,
Who canst make mute fishes warble
Sweet as dying swan's farewell.

'T is your doing that the fingers
Of all passers point to me,
Plainly saying by the gesture,
"There, Rome's lyric singer, see!"

TO TORQUATUS.

[Book IV., Ode 7.]

NOT to expect a lot immortal here
Warn thee the changing year
And fleeting hour, which swiftly bear away
The bright and genial day.

The frosts dissolve beneath
The west wind's vernal breath;
On spring the impatient summer treads,
Herself to fade when fall its fruitage sheds;
Anon dull winter numbs the hand of toil,
And locks in iron sleep the stricken soil;
But nature's hurts swift moons will quick repair,
With bloom and brightness gladden earth and air;
But we, when we have made the dark descent
To realms below,
Where, long ago,

Æneas, Ancus and rich Tullus went,
Are dust in the funereal urn,
Shadows which never more to light return.

Who hath such knowledge he can surely say
The gods will add another morrow to to-day?
Be bounteous to thyself, nor spare
To fill the greedy hands of eager heir!

When thou, Torquatus, art no more,
And Minos to thy shade
His clear, impartial sentence shall have made,
Nor birth, nor eloquence can thee restore,
Nor loyalty unto the gods above.

From gloom of Hades even Dian's love
Her chaste Hippolytus could not recall;
Nor could the might of Theseus disenthral,
From his Lethæan bondage drear
Pirithous dear.

[Book I., Ode 9.]

(AN IMITATION OF ALCÆUS.)

SEEST thou yon snow-heaped mountain whitely gleaming,
And woods that vainly strive their burden to uphold,
And silent rivers that, no longer streaming,
Stand motionless, transfixed with keenest cold?
Now let the genial hearth with piled wood glowing

Dissolve the frost and shed a cheerful gleam,
And from its two-eared Sabine jar a-flowing
Let generous wine of four years' ripeness stream,
No watered draught, but such as seasoned heads esteem.
Thus armed with cheer, both cold and gloom dispelling,
Leave, Thaliarchus, to the gods the rest;
For they, the war of winds and ocean quelling,
Hush, too, the ash-tree on the mountain's crest.

Into the morrow's chance be thou ne'er prying;
Score every day which fate may give as gain;
And while, far off, hoar Age morose is lying,
Let not thy youth the joys of love disdain.

When park and walk the twilight shades are hiding,
And all around are heard love's whispers low,
And ambushed maiden's laugh your step is guiding,
Wouldst thou the sweet hour's secret bliss forego?

[Epistolæ, Book XI., 2.]

DESPOIL us of our pleasures one by one
The predatory years, freebooters sly;
They 've ta'en desire, goodfellowship and fun,
And now they seek to wrest my poesy.

Deem'st thou at Rome the muses can be wooed
'Mid myriad distractions, uproar loud?

Ah, yes ! its streets for meditative mood
Are nicely fitted with their surging crowd !

Here hot with haste a master-builder hies,
With mules and porters following at his heels ;
There groans a derrick hoisting to the skies
Huge stones and beams ; here, blocked by ponderous wheels

A funeral struggles, hindered on its way ;
Here runs a mad dog ; there a noisome swine ;
Here 's inspiration, bard, methinks you say ;
Now meditate your long resounding line.

Lone woods the poets haunt, but cities shun ;
Their patron Bacchus loveth sleep and shade ;
Think'st thou the goal, which mighty bards have won,
My steps can reach 'mid uproar ne'er allayed ?

Even in Athens' streets, where leisure reigns,
The absent, learned recluse a laugh doth raise,
As plods he with his overladen brains
More mute than statue o'er her famous ways.

What figure, say, would musing genius make
Amid the human surges roaring here ?
In such environment, what bard could wake
With fitting words the lyre to music clear ?

HORACE INVITES MÆCENAS TO SPEND THE HEATED TERM WITH HIM.

SCION of Etruria's monarchs,
In a cask, untilted still,
Mellow wine I 've long been keeping
In reserve for thee to spill ;
For thy locks, a wreath of roses
And Sabæan perfume rare.
Snatch thyself from each engagement,
And to Tivoli repair.

Ceaseless plenty makes one dainty ;
Leave your luxury for a while,
And your villa, that is neighbor
To the clouds, aspiring pile.
Let not Rome, its din and splendor,
Constantly your heart beguile.
To the wealthy, change is tonic,
Though they bask in Fortune's smile.

'Neath a lowly roof, full often
Hath a poor man's healthful fare,
Without couches, gorgeous hangings,
Smoothed the wrinkled front of Care.

Hid no longer, now arises
Starred Andromeda's bright Sire ;
Flameth Procyon, fierce forerunner
Of the Dogstar's baleful fire ;
Drives his panting flock the shepherd,
Weary with the noontide heat,
Where the thickets of the Wood-god
Weave a shadowy, green retreat ;
O'er the river's silent margin
Strays no breeze with whispers sweet.

Cares of state meantime annoy thee,
On the city's weal intent.
Fearest thou what plots may menace
In the far-off Orient?
O'er events still in the future
Wisely God a veil doth draw ;
Smiles he, when o'er-anxious mortal
Would transcend his being's law.

This remember : present moment
Manage duly, use aright.
O'er the future thou art powerless ;
It to mould exceeds thy might.
Now like river in its channel
Flowing calm to ocean wide,
Thus the current of events will
Sometimes smoothly, gently glide ;

But, anon, its angry waters,
Freshet-swollen, madly pour,
Bearing ruin, desolation,
Banks and barriers running o'er.
Houses, cattle, trees uprooted,
In a mass it whirls along,
Woods and mountains loud re-echo
Roaring of its torrent strong.

Master of himself and happy
He will be whoe'er can say,
As the shades of evening glimmer,
I have truly lived to-day.
Jove can make to-morrow's heaven
Dark with clouds or bright with sun;
Gladness of a day that 's vanished
Cannot be reversed, undone.

In her cruel game exulting,
Fortune playeth still her wiles;
Still her honors keeps transferring,—
Now on me, on thee she smiles.

While she tarries, I applaud her;
Plumeth she her wings for flight,
In my virtue as a mantle
Wrapt I her caprices slight.
I resign what she hath given,
Dowerless maiden turn to woo,—
Poverty, unlike to Fortune,
Always honest, modest, true.

Groans the mast 'neath storm-wind's scourges,
Needful 't is not then for me
Humble vows and prayers to utter,
Lest my rich stuffs strew the sea.
In my skiff, two-oared, then safely
Through the Ægean's roar I sail,
On to port the bright Twins waft me,
Speeding me with favoring gale.

TO THE ROMAN PEOPLE.*

[Epode 16.]

I.

WASTES itself in cruel slaughter,
Now another age away—
Self-destroyed, to final ruin
Rome is rushing day by day.
Rome, that by no foreign foemen
Conquered hath been hitherto,
Whom nor Gaul, nor blue-eyed Teuton,
Nor yet Carthage could subdue.
Whom nor Spartacus, the fierce serf,
Nor proud Porsena o'erthrew,

* After nearly sixty years of ceaseless civil war, extending from the time of Marius and Sylla to that of Mark Antony, the poet Horace, in the following epode, despairing of a return of peace to his distracted country, recommends the best part of his fellow-citizens to migrate *en masse* from Italy to the Fortunate Islands, in the then unexplored Atlantic Ocean.

We, an impious generation,
In her blood our hands imbrue,
Until Nature with her wild beasts
Here her empire shall renew,
And o'er ashes of the city
Barbarous cavaliers shall ride,
Trample with victorious hoof-dints
All its area far and wide ;
Bones of Romulus uncover,
Hid from sun and wind, to sight,
And the sacred relics scatter
Right and left with fell despite.

II.

How such direful consummation
To avert you seek to know,
You, whose patriot hearts are aching,
Saddened by your country's woe ?
Let this be your resolution—
None is better—hence to go
Wheresoever o'er the billows
You the Siroc's breath shall blow.
As Phocæa's people flying,
Fields and hearth-gods left behind,
And their fanes to wolves and wild boars
With a fierce resolve resigned.
Pleaseth you the stern example ?
Whose advice will more avail ?
Why not then take ship and instant
With auspicious omen sail ?

III.

When from sea's dim bottom lifted
We these stones afloat discern,
(Thus we swear), it shall be lawful
Back from exile to return ;
When Calabria's mountain summits
Waters of the Po shall lave,
Then we shall repent not sailing
Homeward bound across the wave ;
When high Apennine a-stooping
Bows its crest into the sea,
And by passion strange united
Alien natures mingled be ;
When with lust unnatural burning
Tigress antlered stag shall woo,
And the ringdove strangely mated
With the kite shall bill and coo ;
When the grazing herds shall fearless
Hear the tawny lion's roar,
When of briny-deep enamored
Hegoat swimming leaves the shore,
Then return we—not before.

IV.

When with solemn imprecations
We our purpose have defined,
Let us, choicest of the city,
Leave the rabble dull behind ;
Leave the undaring and despondent
In these homes accursed to dwell,

While we woo the sultry Siroc
  Canvas of our bark to swell.
Let no weak, unmanly wailing
  Mark your exit, O ye brave,
As adieu to country bidding
  Fly we o'er the Tyrrhene wave.

v.

Us the ocean vast awaiteth,
  With its earth-encircling brine,
And rich isles and happy fallows,
  O'er which suns of summer shine.
Earth unploughed there yields its harvests,
  And unprunèd blooms the vine ;
There the olive never faileth,—
  Purple figs their own trees grace.
From its watershed the streamlet
  Downward leaps with murmurous pace,—
Shegoats come to pail unbidden,
  Homeward herds with full dugs toil ;
Bears at eve the sheepfolds fright not—
  Hides no snake the kindly soil.

* * * * *

Famous Argo sailed not hither,
  Ne'er those shores Medea knew ;—
Never reached them Tyrian sailor,
  Nor Ulysses' toil-worn crew.
In the ocean's bright seclusion
  Jove apart these islands set
For a people brave and noble,
  Golden Age there lingers yet,

Set apart these blissful regions,
  Where their shores no voyagers hailed,
While the Age of Bronze and Iron
  Over other lands prevailed.
There unbroken peace awaits us
  In that happy, bright retreat ;
There the fields fecund will empty
  Horn of plenty at our feet—
I divinely missioned lead you
  To that refuge far away,
Where your ears will ring no longer
  With the din of civil fray.

HORACE'S LIFE AT ROME.

MÆCENAS' friend, amid Rome's roar he led
  A harassed life, from morn till eve beset ;
Where'er the little bard might show his head,
  Still was he importuned by all he met.

En route unto the Esquiline the crowd
  In envious mood would block the favorite's way,
For news and favors all would clamor loud,
  And bid him secrets of the gods betray.

SIGHTS AND SOUNDS.

ELUDING bores and leeches, all alone
  Through the great city loved he well to stroll—
Amid its motley spectacles unknown,
  With amplest food for thought he stored his soul.

To forum, Circus, sharper's haunts, he went,
Where rendezvous at eve the Orient's scum ;
Gravely to fortune-teller's ear he lent,
Amid the rabble's many-languaged hum.

Girls from the land of soft Adonis plied,
With lutes lascivious, the saunterers there ;
Sweeping their chords oblique they sweetly sighed
The amorous ditties of their native air.

THE HORATIAN MUSE.

HIS blushless Muse with pagan freedom sung
Of carnal pleasure, mincing not her phrase ;
No prudery then checked the poet's tongue,
Or chilled to dull propriety his lays ;

But Horace least of all Rome's lyric choir,
In obscene, fleshly utterance delighted ;
Blunt as Walt Whitman, here and there his lyre
Sounds forth a phrase his editors have slighted.

Born in an age of militancy stern,
Of civic strife and carnage without measure,
Loathing, impatient did his sweet Muse turn
From war with visage grim to rustic pleasure.

THE BURDEN OF HER SONGS.

GLAD youthtime, would she sing, with beauty flies—
Love sapless age's hoariness disdains ;

Blest he who 'neath the pine or plane tree lies,
And tempered cups of bright Falernian drains ;

Whose locks with rose and nard are fragrant still,
When time their tarnished gloss with silver sprinkles ;
For whom some girl in Spartan *dishabille*
Beneath the shade her ivory cithern tinkles.
The passing hour enjoy, for you are fated—
Soon must you leave home, pleasant wife, behind ;
Of all the trees you plant, the cypress hated
The passer faithful to your dust will find.

Your costliest vintages, close-locked, your heir
Will shortly to his comrades young be filling ;
Wine rich as that at pontiffs' banquets rare
Upon your marble floor's mosaic spilling.

THE ETHICS OF HORACE.

BEYOND life's pleasant bounds his eyes could see
Naught but eternal night and shadows drear,
Warning him, ere himself a shade should be,
To take his fill of love and festal cheer.

In many a kindred spirit of to-day
His genial, jovial ethics still are cherished ;

And thus it is his seeming idle lay
Survives when all he sung has perished.

The farthest future through his verse will see
That Roman life he lived with sunny clearness;
The men and things he sung will ever be
Invested with cotemporary nearness.

HIS FATHER.

A FREEDMAN'S son, he proudly owned his sire,
His servile pedigree to hide disdaining;
Comrade of princes, master of the lyre,
His father's worth still in his heart retaining.

Unto that sire the filial minstrel owed
In schools of learned Athenæ amplest leisure,
The Attic salt which sparkles in each ode,
The mastery of every lyric measure.

HORACE AND AUGUSTUS.

HIS chubby person made him Cæsar's jest,
Yet in his raillery there lurked no sting;
Venusia's singing-bird he loved the best,
Though epic Virgil spread a broader wing.

HORACE AND THE RINGDOVES.

WELL might the Muses shield him from the foe—
To lyric fame e'en from his cradle fated—
For when a sleeping child, about his brow,
The legend ran, a garland ringdoves plaited.

PHILIPPI.

HAD the old order at Philippi won,
And victory's palms o'ershaded there his brow,
He would have never known the empire's sun
Which nursed his genius till it warms us now,

Stanching at last the flow of civic blood
Which for a gory century had streamed,
What wonder that to him the sovereign good
Peace, with her hours of golden leisure, seemed!

ALCÆUS AND SAPPHO.

THANKS to his frankly borrowed numbers, still
Alcæus, Sappho, in his accents, sing;
Their own rich chords, alas! no longer thrill,
But only in melodious fragments ring.

Some sparkles of the Grecian lyrists' fire
It was his boast and pride that he had caught ;
Some accents sweet of each Ægean lyre
His fluent Muse to haughty Latium taught.

Policeman of the world, the Roman yet
Was to the Greek a child in thought and song ;
Frankly he owned his intellectual debt,
For all pretence too lordly and too strong.

THE PATRON OF HORACE.

A PERFUMED invalid, who gasped for breath,
Mæcenas curbed the mob with master hand ;
He poets, pleasure loved, and hated death,
Spectre which o'er him life-long seemed to stand.

The sound of falling water gave him sleep
In momentary visitations brief ;
At length insomnia his lids would keep
Wide open, darkness bringing no relief.

Vainly his cascades sang with lulling roar,
And Tibur's air in healthful breezes blew ;
So Cæsar's vizier to the shades went o'er,
And then his lord his wisest minister knew.

Disconsolate, the bard he loved so well
Followed apace, in death as life allied ;
There where the Esquiline upheaved its swell,
Poet and Patron slumbered side by side.

THE ROMAN TAVERN GIRL.

Copa Syrisca caput Graia redimita mitella
Crispum sub crotalo docta movere latus
Ex . . . fumosa saltat lasciva taberna.

VIRGIL.

Patrician Youth.

HO! my little Syrian gipsy,
With thy wanton pirouettes
And thy rattling castanets,
Firing clowns and rustics tipsy!
Like to stars thy bright eyes gleam
Through this low popina's steam,
Which beguiles the enchanted sense
Like clouds of Orient frankincense.

Cease thy dance's dizzy whirl,
Supple Orontean girl;
Come, with gems and gold-dust rare
I will sow thy snooded hair!
* * * * *
Flute no more to boorish men,
Carousing in this steaming den;
No auletris like to thee
Graces Cæsar's revelry:
Let me press thy balmy mouth,
Lithe enchantress from the South!
It smacks of nard and cassia sure.
Thou a tavern lass to lure

To smoky inns, where Satyrs swill
From horny cups their drunken fill!
Shame! thy sultry glances should
Warm an Imperator's blood,
And thy beauty be revealed
In a palace golden-ceiled,
'Mid dædal shapes of art divine,
And gemmy goblets brimmed with wine.
While silver cressets o'er thee shine.
Thou shalt roam no more forlorn,
Waif of beauty lowly born,
From the fragrant lands of morn,
Where Orontes' laurelled flood
Glimmering runs through Daphne's wood.

Copa.

Wilt bear me southward to my home—
To mine own land, the bright, the fair?
No joy I know while here I roam—
I languish for a softer air.
Blue roll the waves on Syria's strand,
And o'er it bends a starrier sky
Than canopies this northern land,
Where e'en in death I would not lie.

The Syrian mountains far away
With azure crests o'erbrow the seas,
There giant cedars, old as they,
Sigh softly on the summer breeze.
O might these weary feet once more
Those far-off ridges reach and tread!

O might I see unclouded soar,
My Syrian heaven above my head!
In this stern land I moan, I pine,
Though wreathed with smiles my lips may be;
Astarte, crescent-horned, divine,
O bear thy votaress o'er the sea!
Bear me to shades of southern bowers,
That wave and rustle in thy gleam;
Bear me to where thy temple towers
By far Orontes' holy stream!

VIRGIL.

GENTLEST of ethnic souls the Mantuan yet
Hell organized for future bigots' use;
He sketched perdition's melancholy realm
With an exactitude which Homer's muse
Knew not. His Sixth Book he must still regret;
He with it zealots armed to overwhelm
Mortals with imagery of endless doom.
Impressed by lines the schoolboy aye should read—
His wails of infants through the infernal gloom
Were formulated into Calvin's creed.
A topographic realism he first gave
To Hell girdled with ninefold Stygian wave
And fens and marshes drear, which many a weed
Lethean in their sluggish ooze did breed.

And yet Imagination never wrought
To more august effect in twilight gloom

With pencil dipped, limning the place of doom,
The empty halls of Dis, the realms inane
Reëchoing to the moans of hopeless pain,
The mournful shadows, who for ferriage sought
With stretched hands yearning for the farther strand
Fluttering like birds, which seek a sunnier land,
The Acherontian maelstrom's hungry roar,
Casting up sand and mire for evermore ;
The squalid ferryman still hale though hoar ;
The hideous hell-dog with his threefold jaw
Gobbling the sleepy sop into his maw :—
These as if entities his fancy saw.

Gladly the eye, escaped from Stygian gloom,
The blissful greenness of Elysian bowers
Beholds, rustling with fresh, immortal bloom ;
A larger ether clothes the fields with light
Purpureal. Blossom fairer flowers,
Another sun and moon and stars more bright
With purer beams the regions blest illume,
Haunted by heroes born in better years ;
There Ilus, there Assaracus appears.
Their shadowy arms and chariots stand afar,
Their loosened coursers graze the immortal meads,
Their love for shield and spear 'neath daylight's star
They bear below, and for the glossy steeds,
Which hale o'er shadowy course the shadowy car.

Sweet is that vale retired umbered with gloom
Of rustling boughs, whence Lethe's river rolls,

Where swarm with beelike hum the countless souls
Corporeal limbs about to reassume,
After their exile long from life and light,
After their penance sharp of fire and wind,
Quaffing the wave of dim forgetfulness,
Which memory of the past erases quite,
With discontinuous life the heart to bless
And give from keen remorse deliverance sweet ;
Thus reminiscence leaving far behind
Emerge they fresh existence to repeat ;
Thus laved and clean they pass in long review
After their draughts of Lethe's healing dew.

TRANSLATION, GRAY'S ALCAIC ODE.

[Written in the Album of the Grande Chartreuse, Dauphieny, 1741.]

O THOU, who hallowest this place austere,
Whatever name rejoices thee to hear,
For no light deity sure haunteth here,
The genius native to these ancient woods,
These torrents loud and savage solitudes !
Divinity more present we adore
Here, where these steeps and trackless summits soar.
And sounding waters ever foam and roar
By night of sombre forest boughs arched o'er ;
Than if gold-wrought by Phidian art divine
He fulgent sate 'neath roof of cedarn shrine.

If with due reverence I thee address,
Grant me, a youth world-weary, quietness.
Here in these calm retreats I fain would dwell,
Where Law of Silence spreads its holy spell;
If Fortune, this forbidding, shall once more
Engulf me, where life's angry surges roar,
At least, O Father, grant my age may find
In nook remote, a care-free, tranquil mind,
Where, hushed by distance tumult of the crowd,
Perturbeth not repose, no longer loud.

NIGHTWIND—POET.

Nightwind.

WAIL I in the hours of darkness
O'er a world of change and death,
Why should not to notes of sorrow
Be attuned my fitful breath?
In the sad, autumnal season,
Wildest sounds my long-drawn sigh,
While the clouds make haste through heaven,
And the leaves before me fly.

Poet.

Lonesome wind, a lonely dreamer
Finds you keyed unto his mood,
Though your notes are wild and dreary,
Still they soothe his solitude.

For from spirit-realm they summon
Forms and faces once most dear.
Thus your sad, nocturnal dirges,
Welcome are to poet's ear.

Nightwind.

Ever in the brown October,
Through the immemorial past,
Over forest, lake, and fenland,
Thus has raved my nightly blast.
Thus the summer's faded tresses
Have my swift gusts whirled on high,
With the rustling gold of autumn
Strowing all the earth and sky.

Poet.

Vain are all things human, mortal,
Seems your gusty moan to say,
Like to leaves man's generations
Feel the blight of swift decay.
Like to leaves his hopes are blasted
By the frost of chill mischance—
Vainly 'gainst his limits strives he,
Thrall of fate and circumstance.

Nightwind.

What is earth but one vast charnel,
Dust of fleeting tribes of man
Sinking back into her bosom,
Since the flight of years began?

Whatsoe'er they did or suffered,
Lethe claimed them all at last—
I, the Nightwind, unforgetting,
Chant their requiem with my blast.

Poet.

Airy minstrel of the midnight,
General wailer o'er the dead,
Annual filling earth and heaven
With thy moans for all things fled,
Never sang a human poet,
Strains so weirdly sad as thine,
Strains that with a wild emotion
Thrill this lonely heart of mine.

THE LOON,
OR GREAT NORTHERN DIVER.

I.

WINGED correlate of moose, bear, cariboo,
Creatures of sylvan nature's savage mood,
With primitive and uncouth forms indued,
And cries and voices keyed to solitude,
Such screams and wails as ancient nature knew,
When man in caves still inarticulate grew,
Lone lakes remote thy lavatories be ;
Eluding in their depths the hunter's eye,
Thou taunt'st him from afar with clamorous cry,
As of derisive laughter, maniac glee.
Where falls the shadow of the desert pine

On coves of wild-wood meres thou oar'st thy way
With swan-like stateliness at day's decline,
Startling with screams unearthly twilight gray.

II.

Deepening the weirdness of the forest old,
Which, hushed and sad, seems brooding on the days
When mammoths, crashing, roamed its branchy maze,
And beasts and men were of a huger mould.
In immemorial years of that far past,
Oh, raucous bird, thy kindred screamed and dived,
And with the moose and reindeer have survived,
Where primitive woods their mystic shadows cast,
In a still vigorous progeny, which soon
The hunter's rifle will exterminate,
Sole live things of the world's primeval state,
Still stirring in the light of sun and moon,
As fast as vanishes the forest's gloom,
Wild creatures of its shades must meet their doom.

TWO SONNETS.

THE PRIEST'S REMEDY.

THE balm of future bliss, Sir Priest, not long
Will work e'en on the *plebs* low-browed and dull,
Whose hard-earned pence keep Peter's treasury full,

And thee in clover, ruddy, fresh, and strong.
This life is somewhat they begin to feel ;
Homes they demand, if not so proud and high
The so-called house of God towers towards the sky
At their expense, while they in penury kneel.
Is the hereafter made more bright and sure
By living here in squalor, ignorance, crime ?
Hope is a diet thin, howe'er sublime.
Faith's poppy soon will cease to drug the poor,
Sword, cross, and sceptre longer to obey,
While feast the few the many born to sway.

HOLY SEES.

ERE Peter's dome o'er Southern Europe rose,
The shrine of Delphos was the Holy See,
The Pythia's lips heaven's will did then disclose
Foaming with a prophetic ecstasy.
The old world swarmed to bright Apollo's steep,
Climbing the Pleistus-gorge in ceaseless throngs.
Thither the pilgrims went with faith as deep
As unto current devotees belongs,
Who wearily fare to Mecca and to Rome,
As unto Deity's especial home,
Where his anointed earthly agents dwell,
Whose acts he faileth not to ratify
With nod of assent from his throne on high,
Whether their sentence be to heaven or hell

NATURE.

THOU art silent : Man, thy creature,
Rises oft to explanation,—
Kindly lends his gods to aid thee
In thine endless task, creation ;
Builds he on thy breast his temples
Underneath the boundless azure ;
Gradually to dust the ages
Crumble them with sure erasure.

Shrines and creeds arise and vanish
While thy skies are blue as ever,
Bending as in calm derision
O'er the bigot's vain endeavor.
Thou art silent, Solemn Mother !
But have lived in all the ages
Souls with thy sublime composure,
Who have read thy star-strewn pages.

They, thy grand reserve revering,
With no selfish prayers were kneeling ;
Unto such thy secret ever,
Glimpse by glimpse, art thou revealing,—
Truth's torch-bearers, wide and wider
They her radiance are diffusing,
Gloom of ancient night dispelling,
Mind from error's fetters loosing.

Vision of thine awful beauty
Once rash mortals perished seeing ;
Now no more thine unveiled presence
Are thy chosen votaries fleeing ;
On their lonely vigils stealing
Com'st thou frequent, unaware,
Fillest with ambrosial fragrance,
Where they muse, the awe-hushed air.

Vistas fathomless of glory
Doth thy waving wand unfold,
Blossoms on the world-tree bursting,
Starry fruitage they behold
Hanging under other heavens,
Other firmaments sublime,
Where the bloom of young creation
Still is in its matin prime.

AROMAS.

I.

MOONLIGHT.

MOONLIGHTED world, what soothing calm
And benediction breathe from thee !
The great sun splendor hath, but charm
Dwells in the moon's periphery.

The cynosure of all the eyes,
Which e'er this complex scanned of things,
Still reigns the moon, and from the skies
A mystery sweet o'er nature flings.

Lover and poet from her face
  Feel o'er them steal divine repose—
To maiden's beauty lend her rays,
  A witchery no daylight knows.

Love, loneliness, and silence all
  Are deepest 'neath her midnight beam ;
Then most can beauty's might enthrall—
  Then hearts with most effusion stream.

II.

JUNE.

THE grass in billows rolling ;
  The play of sheen and shadow—
The oriole's fitful fluting—
  The bloom of field and meadow—
The surge of life and beauty
  The humblest nook inflowing—
The rainbow's arch of triumph
  With green and violet glowing—
The bee with fragrance laden,
  The golden elfin hummer,
Like arrow swiftly raiding
  On velvet buds of summer,
These mean that June is reigning,
  That quick must be our greeting,
For peerless as her bloom is,
  It is as brief and fleeting.

III.

THE LOVER.

WHEN night with restful shade
Thrice-prayed-for falls round me,
Last gleam of consciousness
Is tender thought of thee.

That thought the beams of morn
First kindle in my brain—
Through din of day 't is borne
To stilly night again.

IV.

THE PROBLEM.

I SEARCHED the tomes of famous sages,
Bards, mystics, thinkers of all ages—
Fine things were sprinkled o'er their pages,
But to the question whence and where
No certain answer found I there,
But only vague surmise or hardy affirmation,
Which Faith received at Power's dictation.
I turned from shallow lore of men
To grassy page of nature, then,
To shade of night, to sheen of day,
To foodful earth, to ocean gray,
To viewless winds that rave or sigh,
To clouds, the sailors of the sky,
To rivers, which 'twixt mountain, sea-beach ply,
To stars, that twinkle dim on high,
But nature, mute, deigned no reply ;
Too busy in her grand vocation
To pause for word of explanation.

v.

LA VIDA ES SUENO.

SUDDEN emerging from the depths of sleep
In silence of the middle night, we seem
Only awaking to another dream,
From mystery to mystery still more deep.
From birth to death we swiftly glide along
Upon the stream of years, voyagers, that know
Not whence we came, nor to what port we go,
Borne by a current fathomless and strong.

To waifs like to ourselves we fondly cling,
Only to feel the sweet ties severed soon,
Only to know that 'neath the sun and moon
The heart is mocked and finds no lasting thing.
Why stretch vain hands of longing? Calmly glide,
Nor try to stem life's darkly rushing tide.

THE INDIAN'S HEAVEN.

[From Schiller.]

WHERE he has gone no winter chills,
There never falleth snow;
Spontaneous o'er the happy fields
The golden maize-ears grow;
With birds the tuneful thickets swarm,
With game the forests dim;
In lakes ne'er rough with gale or storm,
In shoals the fishes swim.

MONTICELLO.

(TO R. S. S——.)

THROUGH storied Monticello, I
Would fain with you have wandered:
Recalled its Sage and o'er his home's
Dilapidation pondered.
You write that weeds its courts invade
The threshold overgrowing:
No more the light of other days
From friendly windows glowing.
An Ossianic look it wears,
To judge from your epistle,
A haunt for fox and bat and owl,
And sterile growths of thistle;
Where undisturbed the spider weaves
His web o'er pane and ceiling,—
Apt, like thy towers, Afrasiab,
To stir a saddened feeling.
The mountains near through summer air
Their ridges blue upheaving,
Oft as he scaled their breezy heights,
Unmeasured outlook giving.
These are his monuments—dull Time's
Corrosive tooth defying;
Throwing their shadows o'er the sward,
'Neath which his dust is lying.

He made the dreams of lone Rousseau
The charter of our nation :
What though his whilom mansion is
A wreck and desolation ?
It matters not—his fame is sure—
The fabric, which he builded,
Though shaken sore is still upright—
Its timbers have not yielded.

SEPTENNIAL VENUS.

RESPLENDENT star of Morn and Even too—
Thou radiant pursuivant of dawning light,
Hurling thy shafts through noon-tide's cloudless blue,
Regent of sunset-spaces vast and bright !
Hence, Hesper called in mythic ages old,
Bringing the flock home to the darkening fold.
Foul wrong they did when with thy name they starred
The giant angel of Revolt with thunder scarred.
The peace of Morn and Even sheddest thou
Sprinkling with dew the fevered, pallid brow.
Of yore Hesperian climes and fabled isles
Stretched clear-obscure beneath thy starry smiles :
His sceptre wielded sky-fallen Saturn gray
In splendor of thy sparkling, sunset ray.

THE HUNTER'S MOON.

LAST night the Hunter's Moon serenely shone
Transmuting all things to white Parian stone.
In vain in that weird sheen was slumber sought—
The brain by Luna fired was over-wrought.
Outside the trees disleaved and spectral stood,
While far-off stars, lone isles in argent skies,
Witched with their beams the sleepless watcher's eyes
That nearer on their shores would fain intrude:
But hopeless isolation, voids of space,
Which wing of seraph might not dare explore,
Leave them a beauteous mystery evermore
From far depths beaming on the upturned face
With melancholy radiance meek and mild,
As if their spheres had never sin inisled.

THE GERMAN MUSE *vs.* THE ENGLISH.

[From the German of Klopstock.]

GLOWING with rivalry I saw the Muse
Of German-land with Britain's Muse contend.
Two goals of emulation dimly rose
Afar erected at the arena's end.

One goal with Orient palms o'ershadowed stood,
While Druid boughs above the other sighed ;
Inured to conflict, and of haughty mood,
The Britoness her crownless rival eyed.

Over the lists had oft careered her feet,
For 'gainst the Muse of Hellas she had run,
And with Rome's loftiest genius dared compete,
And in the contest bays immortal won.

Her rival there before her trembling stood
With eagerness, not fear, for she was bold.
The rose of victory on her flushed cheek glowed,
And o'er her shoulders waved her locks of gold.

Her breath scarce in her heaving breast she held ;
She thought the herald's trumpet pealing rung ;
Glistened her eyes with joy ; her bosom swelled,
As towards the goal she bending forward hung.

Proud of her rival, of herself more proud,
With haughty glance the Britoness surveyed
Tuisco's glorious daughter ; then aloud,
Ah ! yes, we grew together in the forest's shade,

Old bards about our cradles darkling sang ;
Their boughs above us waved the oak-groves hoar ;
But in mine ears an idle rumor rang
Long since, that thou, my sister, wast no more.

Pardon, if thou art an immortal too ;
At yonder barrier I the truth shall learn.

It standeth there, the goal of oaks in view ;
And, farther on, canst thou the goal of palms
discern ?

Thou standest mute ; but ah, full well I know
That daring scarce repressed, that silence proud,
Those looks of fire, which, darting earthward, glow,
Are each more eloquent than utterance loud.

Yet ere his perilous note the herald sound
And ere thy breast the trumpet's signal thrills,
Bethink thee ; I invincible was found
By Her of Hellas and the Seven Hills !

She spake ; the herald with his trump drew near
The signal of the struggle dread to peal ;
Daughter of Albion to me most dear,
For thee profoundest loyalty I feel.

Warmly I love thee ; but e'en more than thee
The imperishable bay, the conqueror's meed ;
Seize, if thou wilt, the wreath of victory ;
A moiety of renown at least to me concede.

How throbs my pulse ! haply the goal sublime,
Ye powers immortal, I may first attain !
Feeling thy breath, O Britoness, meantime
Stirring my locks, as I the triumph gain !

Sudden the trumpet sounded, and they flew,
As flies an eagle o'er the vast career ;
But dust-clouds rising wrapt them from the view,
As they unto the goal of oaks drew near.

JUNE.

EARTH, a mighty censer, swings
Fuming odors to the Sun :
Scents of myriad blossomings
Which fresh nature overrun.
Streets with orchard-blooms are strown,
And where'er the Southwind stirs
Balms are to the nostrils blown
Making all men worshippers.

Hebe's month, refulgent June,
All too evanescent thou !
Buds to blossoms haste too soon
Hanging fruits upon the bough :
None but festal days are thine,
Breathing youth and hope and joy :
Blooms half-opened round thee twine,
Maiden beauty makes thee coy.
Comes Midsummer, gorgeous queen,
Weaving mists of sun and shower :
Bringing woods a brighter green,
And the rose to perfect flower.

THE STREAM OF LIFE.

THE viewless stream of consciousness,
Of thought and will and feeling
So long reflecting night and day,
Beyond their sphere is stealing,—
From mystic fount on heights of youth
Long years ago 't was springing,
And mountain steep and piny gorge
Were with its loud glee ringing.

Dull clouds of woe, sun-gleams of joy
Have gloomed, have glassed its flowing,—
Through headlong youth, through manhood stern,
Without a pause 't was going :
At length, it nears the engulfing sea,
Outside of life dim heaving,
And stillier grows its current as
Its wonted banks 't is leaving.

ORIENTALISMS.

I.

THE DESERT.

ANGELS and gods and demons in the waste
Semitic prophets, saviors met of old,
The sandy columns that before them rolled,
Whirled by the simoom's breath with lurid haste,

Were guiding deities. Fierce heat and glare
Fill with illusions all the desert's air
Fevering each throbbing sense, till voices scare
Of dead or far-off friends, and shadows dire
Beckon to ruin. 'Neath the noonday's fire
Mirage rears on the horizon's quivering rim
Green bowers of rest and paradises dim
With breezy boughs, whence minarets aspire ;
There Christ met Satan, and remorseful Paul
A dread voice heard through burning noontide call.

II.

TEMPLE-CITIES—JERUSALEM, DELPHI.

O TEMPLE-CITIES of the past ! your days
Of dominating grandeur were the same ;
Upon the mountains pedestalled the rays
Of morning kindled you with Orient flame.
Phoibos—Jehovah—each a mighty name,
Which spellbound many a glorious ancient race,
Gave to your temples all their sway and fame,—
Each was a *genius loci*, spirit of a place
And nation grand, which could the ages mould.
The Lord of light and prophecy and song
Has to a lovely myth been dwindled long.
Still o'er the poet's land he sway doth hold,
While Israel's perfect lore of right and wrong
The empire of his god will yet prolong.

TO SWEDENBORG.

O MYSTIC, moony-faced with dreamy eyes!
Into thy tomes, dead seas of platitude,
Venturous and bold is he who dares intrude.
Yet thou a seer art thought by men full wise,
So to thy manès I will not be rude—
Thine ecstasies of fragrant Mocha born,
I deem, without which thou wast all forlorn.
With God himself thou didst converse at will,
The mighty dead were vocal to thine ear;
Thy soul at pleasure roamed the spirit sphere,
While of the body it was tenant still.
Hallucinations such as these were worth
All dazzling baubles most esteemed of earth.

A CAUCUS OF CROWS.

WITH many a jubilant hurrah
A swarm of crows flew here and there
With swift gyrations through the air,
In caucus met from near and far.
Over a pinewood, like a cloud,
They whirling hung with clamors loud.
'T was dull November, and the day
Was overcast, blank, drizzly, gray.
Perching they blackened all the wood
In a deliberative mood.

An ancient Corvus from his bill
Persuasive accents did distil :

"Winged darkies, what a gloomy scene !
Only the pine trees now are green,
And not a corn ear can we glean.
The orchard birds have flown away
To sun themselves in tropic ray.
Why linger we, whose wings are strong
For migrant flight, however long ?
Let 's instant scale the heights of air
And to the summerlands repair.
The puny bluebird e'en is there,
At least an equal enterprise
Should waft us, too, to warmer skies.
O'er these hard acres, rocky, rough,
We 've vainly foraged long enough.
Needless the scarecrows which they place
On this lean soil to fright our race.
E'en weevils give the barren earth,
In pure disgust, a wide, wide berth.
Let 's probe yon sullen, leaden sky,
Till palm and orange we descry.
Why sit we here with pinions furled,
As if this spot were all the world ?
The stupid goose of heavy flight
Is yet a winged cosmopolite.
O'er rivers, steeples, mountains, lakes,
His airy way each fall he takes,
Leaves frozen fens and storms behind
High-voyaging on the southward wind

Unto his austral sojourn, where
In reedy solitudes rich fare
He faileth not with ease to find.
There, warmed by tropic suns and moons,
He oars his way o'er still lagoons ;
His feathered squadrons safely swim
Paludal pools in graceful trim,
From predatory man afar,
With naught their pastimes sweet to mar.
Let 's follow where the goose has gone
And hibernate in softer zone.
'T is true our sombre plumage may
Not quite befit a brighter day,
But, maugre that, let 's speed away."

"Well said, old maize thief ! " cried a young
Irreverent crow of ribald tongue.
Whereat they mounted one and all
Swiftly to heights ethereal ;
Then heading southward swiftly flew,
til they winnowed summery blue.

OUR BARDS.

AS when in some May morning twilight, sweet
With scent of springtime's bursting buds, a low,
Contagious twittering the ear doth greet,
Spreading from bough to bough—still louder grow
The notes—with sunrise, in clear carols flow ;

Not Europe's sunny South in Petrarch's time
Was more melodious with amorous rhyme
Than are these states. The far Sierras break
In strains uncouth. Our singers of the West
No eagle pinions bear aloft in blaze
Of zenith-climbing sun ; their flight they take
O'er lowly meads—in orchards trill their lays,
And, like the mocking-bird, they still love best
To thrill with borrowed notes the listener's breast.
Some English master first the keynote sounds,
Then cis-Atlantic bards break into song.
'T was Byron, Wordsworth, Scott, and Shelley long,
Whose styles were reproduced within our bounds.
'T is Tennyson and Morris, Browning now.
A wild-wood native wreath alone the brow
Of Emerson with laureate leaves surrounds.
Erotomaniac Swinburne e'en the rounds
Of our nice monthlies sadly watered runs.
Of yore thus haughty Rome's poetic sons
Kindled their spirits cold with Grecian fire.
Alcæus, Sappho tuned the Latin lyre
Of Horace—thus ungenial Roman wit
Was with the blight of imitation smit.

THE VEILED ISIS.

"I AM all that ever has been,
And whate'er existeth now ;
I am all that ever will be,
And the veil which hides my brow

Mortal yet hath never lifted."
Such was the inscription grand
O'er the statue veiled of Isis,
Which in Saïs old did stand.

Were the mighty Mother's image
Carven now, as 't was of yore,
Half-withdrawn her starry peplum
Would her whole face hide no more ;
Glimpses of her august beauty
To her suitors yields she now—
Stands no more a templed mystery,
To which mortals blindly bow.

SONNET TO CARL SCHURZ.

A TEUTON thou and worthy of thy race—
Thus while I listen, gazing on thy brow
With thought's clear sigil stamped, persuasion's grace
Thy lips o'erflowing,—recalls my mind somehow
Old Homer's broad-browed oxen of the Sun,
Which in Apollo's temple-pastures fed.
The far-fetched fancy through my brain to run
Doubtless did cause thy spacious-fronted head,
Eurymetopos,* 't is old Homer's phrase.
Wherefore a glorious sun-ox call I thee,

* *Εὐρύς*, wide, broad, — frequently used in Homer of heaven, earth, and sea ; and *Μέτωπον*, the space between the eyes, and hence the forehead. Ætna is called the *Μέτωπον* of Sicily by Pindar, P. 1, 57.

Worthy the prairie-pastures vast to graze,
Where sunset's ruminants roam unmuzzled, free,
To which thou fled'st for refuge when the ire
Of kings pursued thee with a menace dire.

RIVERS.

LEVELLERS, lucid pathways to the sea,
Clear veins and arteries of mother earth
Draining the clouds which fold the mountains' brows
For dews to make the valleys green below!
Realms are your gifts, conquerors of barrenness,
Mirrors of mightiest nations' capitals;
Desert were continents and herbless wastes
Did not your liquid largess make them fair
With flowers and waving grain and homes of men.
Mediators 'twixt earth and azure sky,
The lonely urns which feed your gracious flow
Might well be guarded by divinities,
The beauteous denizens of fable-land,
Naiads with locks of amber-dropping hair
And genii hoar, with dripping temples horned
In sign of regal might and majesty.
Singing, you leave your natal clouds behind,
The granite water-sheds, that give you birth,
And leap from crag to crag to plains below,
Longing to reach the ocean-valley vast,
Of inland waters' terminus and bourne.
Your banks were civilization's primal haunts;

From out your inundating slime arose
Priesthoods and royalties in history's dawn.
Engarlanded with fruits of all the zones
Commerce fast by your deltaed mouths upsprung,
Binding in bonds of brotherhood the world.
O rivers of the late-found West ! long time
In solitude unsung, unknown, you flowed !
Naiad nor God tended your hidden urns,
With brooding brows watching you well to light ;
No votive locks of youths and maidens fair
Floated adown your forest-mirroring streams ;
No festal barge of beauty crowned was oared,
To sound of flutes, upon your waters clear.
But when, at length, the tardy poet came,
He found you ministering to his musing moods
With inspiration true, if not so high,
As that which Mincius, Meles, Avon gave.
O lovely lakes and tarns innumerous,
Eying with lucid depths our western world,
Fair nursing mothers ye of thousand streams,
That furrow all our treey continent,
Reflecting in their depths primeval woods,
With gold of cereal harvests interspersed.
'Twixt frowning mountain walls and wizard shores,
Imperial Hudson, with triumphal stream,
Rolls statelier than Danube or than Rhine
Deploying through the Palisades upon the sea,
With commerce-laden waters, past the domes
And spires of glittering Mannahatta knit
By steamers plying, shuttle-like, athwart
The waves to all towns metropolitan,

In bonds of traffic and of sisterhood.
No haze of mediæval centuries
Gives sentimental charm, O river grand,
Unto thy banks, but maize-crowned Autumn swathes
Them with a natural glory fairer far.
Well might the fabled sleeper couched aloft
In some lone dell o'erlooking thy broad stream
Dream on through decades long of lapsing years,
Till his own generation all were gone.
The weird myth is in sweet accord with thy
Autumnal witcheries and storied shores,
Where sleeps the wizard, who with pen, wand-like,
Hath legended thy stream for evermore.

FREE TRANSLATIONS FROM GOETHE'S FAUST.

I.

FAUST'S DEATH SONG.

O BLEST is he around whose temples Death
The blood-stained laurel wreathes 'mid victory's splendor,
Whom, after mazes of the giddy dance,
He finds at rest in arms of maiden tender;
O would, when heart and soul were all aglow,
With lightning swiftness he had struck me low!

II.

FAUST CONTEMPLATING SUNSET.

Behold how in the evening sunbeams shimmer
The hamlets girt with sward of freshest green,
Where while the spent day fades to twilight glimmer,
There yonder hastes it to another scene.
O that from earth might lift me pinions light
To follow ever on its traces bright!

Would I might see in endless sunset's sheen
The stilly world beneath me ever glowing
With heights on fire, vales hushed in peace serene,
And silver brooks to golden rivers flowing!
No mountain wild could with its gorges stay
My godlike transit, or my flight delay.

How fair its warm, bright bays the sea would spread
In sunset ripples 'neath my ravished eyes!
While endlessly, 'mid pomp of vapors red,
The God of Day would sink to other skies;
Meantime, with night behind and day before,
I drink eternal splendor evermore.

In every breast a wild, ebullient feeling,
That yearns to soar aloft, afar, is born,
When over us the lark his lay is pealing
Lost in the heights of azure air forlorn,
When o'er the pine-plumed mountain high
The buoyant eagle sails with wings outspread,

And migratory cranes their pinions ply
By lure of home o'er seas and deserts led.

FAUST AT HIS VIGILS.

I.

O Plenilune, whose beams so oft have shone
On me at this dull desk my vigils keeping,
Would for the last time that thy radiance lone
My woe were in its dewy splendor steeping!
Long, long o'er piles of books and papers dreary,
O pensive orb, I 've watched thee sad and weary.

II.

Would that over some breezy mountain tall
In sheen of thy loved rays I now were going,
And in thy midnight dews, that softly fall,
Were finding bath of health in starlight flowing!
Through mountain gorge and over glimmering meadow
With lightened brain would float I like a shadow.

III.

Here in this Gothic chamber prisoned still
I 'm breathing dungeon air, with dampness shaking;
Here e'en the beams of heaven with joy that thrill
Through blurred and painted panes are sadly breaking.
O'er me a book-piled vault all gloomy hovers,
Where revel moths and dust the learned tomes covers.

IV.

A smoke-bleared, book-and-paper world doth hold
  Me in its dull environment forever,
Mid glasses, chests, and heirlooms manifold
  Close crammed with carefullest endeavor—
Then, askest thou, why in thy bosom beating
With stifled throbs thy heart itself is eating?

V.

Instead of living nature, where erst men
  'Mid flowers and streams and trees high God created,
Immured within this smoky, mouldy den,
  To live 'mid dead men's bones thou seemest fated.
Up, then, to fields and forests straight be flying
Afar with this thrice mystic volume hieing.

THE OLD VOYAGERS.

I.

THEY roamed in lonely seas, in far-off isles,
  And arms of maids barbaric found a spell,
  Like Homer's Lotos, having power to quell
Nostalgia's pangs. Contented in the smiles
  Of their Calypsos evermore to dwell,
All day, at ease with their wild charmers laid
In dalliance sweet beneath the breadfruit's shade
They heard the ocean pulsing on the shore.
  A wild and supple progeny beside

Them quickly sprung, linking them more and more
Unto the savage strands, where they had found
An unbought hospitality—free ground,
  Unfenced, undeeded, beautiful as wide.
What wonder some would nevermore resume
Shackles of civilization 'mid such bloom !

II.

After a generation e'en, that quick
  In climes remote and strange adventures passed,
The malady of home would make some sick,
  Till eager for return they travelled fast.
Alas ! What found they in their fatherlands ?
  The grassy burial mounds of kindred flown,
  Themselves to strangers changed, whom none
    would own—
A coldness worse than that of alien strands ;
  Such sad experience waited Mandeville
From Ind and far Cathay returning lone,
  Deeming his presence would his old home thrill
With joy. The hoary voyager came too late.
The hearts that loved him, stilled by time and fate,
Were throbless in the dust. New faces gaze
Upon the weary Pilgrim with amaze.

TO THE NILE.

O STORIED Nile ! your waters have up-borne
  All kinds of men and craft, from cradle light
Of foundling Moses, barge of Cleopatra fair,
Galley of Cæsar conquering lands of morn,

To Nelson's fleet, exploding into air
Napoleon's, leaving him in sorry plight.
All these thy mystic waters rolling down
From Libyan lakes through sand-flats silent, brown,
Have floated through the long-drawn centuries
'Neath blue, blue skies with languid breeze.
Now lotos-eating New-World millionaires
With pretty daughters drift upon thy tide,
Over the Sphynx-sown levels gazing wide,
Forgetful of their Corners, Rings, and Cares.

BYRON AND SHELLEY.

LIKE theirs no accents since have rolled
The whole wide earth from zone to zone
In briefest years they made their own,
For they were doomed not to be old.

No sicklied, cloistered bards were they :
Their songs are fresh as breaking day ;
They felt the impulse wild and free
Of Europe bent on liberty ;
They groped not in the twilight dim
Of mythic times for myths to hymn
In dainty numbers, honey-sweet,
To lull the ear of caste effete.
Though on the heights of fortune born,
They were the scalds of Freedom's morn,
And through their glowing numbers came
The Revolution's breath of flame.
An indignation fierce, sublime,
Made theirs no dilettante rhyme.

For man, the martyr held so long
In despot's clutch, they wrought with song,
Indignant melody, that made
His dull oppressors' hearts afraid.

When Czar and Kaiser's sceptres old
Are broke and tyrants' days are told ;
When the last Pontiff lies inurned,
And ritual spice no more is burned :
Then on some rose-hued Alpine height,
Which rays of morn and evening smite,
Their forms colossal wrought should stand,
High o'er the Switzer's chainless land,
Far-seen, far-shining evermore,
While pilgrims haunt Lake Leman's shore.

SPRING.

THE Mighty Mother waneth not,
But keeps the promise of her prime ;
Spring thrills through earth's remotest spot
And sweetest comes to harshest clime.

O germs of beauty, joy, and life !
Which darkling lurked in frozen mould,
When wintry winds and storms were rife,
As fresh as e'er your blooms unfold !

To vernal beam and call of May,
And music of the golden bee,
Again with youth and beauty gay
Comes forth the lost Persephone.

And with her brings the birds of spring
From southern sojourns far away;
O'er northern fields the swallow's wing
Is glancing in the vernal ray.

The long day broodeth warm and bright
O'er loosened streams and mount and plain;
The south wind wooes with whispers light
The grass and foliage back again.

But vainly to the dead below
He murmurs soft with plaintive sigh,—
Unheeding of the season's glow
In mouldering apathy they lie.

His gentle clarion cannot wake
Their dark encampment lone and cold;
Filled full of rest, no heed they take
Of genial [illegible]n root and mould.

PIONEERS.

IN Custom's ruts how smoothly roll
The noiseless wheels along !
Upon the beaten highway tread
The many-footed throng.

But who would open regions new,
Where Truth in covert dwells,
With axe two-edged his way must hew
Nor heed enchanters' spells.

Full many a blow and many a life
It takes a path to clear,
A little foot-track scarce observed
Through Error's jungle drear.

But soon to spacious highway grown
That little path has spread ;
Then cars triumphal o'er it roll,
It feet innumerous tread.

But o'er the martyred pioneers,
Who for the sunbeams made
An entrance with their blood and tears,
Oblivion spreads her shade.

GIORDANO BRUNO.

BURNT FEB. 17, 1600.

FULL high-advanced, Truth's banner bright he bore
In a still priestly age, which fagots piled
Around the Sons of Light, whose spirits soar,
By fires ecclesiastic, undefiled,
Into the heaven of fame, whence rule they now
The realm of thought with sovereign, kingly sway,
Hierophants of Truth, before them bow
The nations,—gladly their behests obey.
Immortal Bruno! haply yet will stand
Over the ruins of the Roman Baal,
Whose minions burnt thy flesh, thy statue grand,*
For full enfranchised times and men to hail,
When hierarchies proud no more can bind
With slavish dogmas e'en the common mind.

SATURN AND JUPITER.

THE stellar kings of old astrology,
Saturn and Jove, at eve their thrones ascend,
But faith in might of stars an eager eye
No more upon their aspects bright doth bend

---

*These lines were written before Bruno's statue was erected at Rome on the site of his martyrdom.

For signs of destiny. No more they shine,
Portents of fate, malignant or benign,
At puny man's birth-hour. In other days
The arrogant fancy peopled starry space
With deities, who, from their luminous spheres,
Made man's behoof their chiefest, only care—
Planets august! This eve's autumnal air
Rejoices in your beams. The ripened year's
Horn of abundance, poured o'er misty vale
And hill in moonshine steeped, with joy we hail.

THE HUNTER'S MOON.

BRAVELY through flying rack the hunter's moon
Is struggling zenithward with fitful ray;
Now darkling gleams, now pours a paler day
Effulgent through the vapors round her strewn.
At length she conquers; heaven is all her own;
In argent splendor bask beneath her throne
Lakes, crimsoned forests, vales and streams
And mountain summits lone and cold and hoar,
Cities and hamlets still. O Satellite!
Thy lustre is too strong for sleep and dreams;
Night is not darkness in thy fulgent light,
But milder day. From sun to sun they pour,
Thy beams on silent towns, reaped fields of maize
Mingling with rosy Dawn's thy pallid rays.

AN OCTOBER EVE.

λελουμενος
'Αστέρ' ὀπωρινῷ ἐναλίγκιον, ὅς τε μαλιστα
Λαμπρὸν παμφαίνηδι λελουμένος 'Ωκεανόῖο.
Iliad, v., 5.

OCTOBER'S eves are lucid, soft, and warm,
And through the rosy veils of twilight air
The stars burn with a radiance rich and rare,
A naphthaline splendor, whether they swarm
In golden groups or solitary shine.
Like Homer's Sirius, from ocean's brine,
Which then glowed brightest, stars and planets blaze
With red autumnal fire, and lo! the moon,
A glorious crescent, adds her dewy rays
To make a perfect night; but she too soon
Hastes to her setting in the roseate west.
As gorgeously the earth below is drest
In crimson foliage as the sky in beams.
Sleep will to-night be fraught with glorious dreams.

OCEAN.

LEVELLER, purger, eater of continents, isles,
Feeder of nations, with thy finny droves
Rising in homage, when the young moon smiles,
Obsequious thy tidewave 'neath her moves,

Swelling and foaming on from midmost sea
Shoreward, with haughty and illumined crest,
Thy floor a hidden charnel will not be
Forever, but again in green be drest.

With saltless rills thy vales will murmur then ;
Thy submerged mountains know the stars once more,
And be the sunlit haunts of birds, beasts, men,
As in the immemorial days of yore.

Thy vast and many-armed embrace includes
The continents and isles—thine areas o'er
Three parts of earth make watery solitudes,
That stretch in misty plains from shore to shore.

Here towers on Libya's marge the tropic palm ;
Far off on northern beach the pine tree sighs ;
Here sings thy surf on coral strands its psalm ;
There lips an iron coast 'neath frowning skies.

HERSCHEL'S STAR-CLUSTERS.

PULSES of light, whose throbs began
Ere yet was human vision,
Tidings ye bring to our young race
Transcending all tradition.
The Ether-sea of cosmic space
Has rippled with your lustre
Uncounted æons, since you left
Your dimly glimmering cluster ;

Lone messengers from times and skies,
From ages and from regions,—
Whose distance laughs to scorn the wings
Of Milton's seraph legions.
No weariness your flight has stayed
Of million-yeared duration,
With unimagined speed you 've reached
Undimmed this earthly station,

Piercing our night with lonely rays
Of far-come, mystic splendor,
Chaldean-like unto your sheen
Our homage we must render.
Armed with the lens our visual sense
Responds to your vibrations.
From depths of Cosmos though you come
You stir no new sensations.
You tell the bigots of our earth
With radiance most persuasive
That Force and Matter know no bounds,
That Law is all-pervasive.

Through boundless space and boundless time
That sternest order reigneth,
And into one harmonious Whole
Atoms and orbs constraineth,—
Through galaxies of countless suns
Drear space like gold-dust strowing ;
Through nebulæ, those clouds of worlds
In starry strata glowing,—

The same unwearied forces work
And make whole systems blossom
In stellar clusters like the flowers
Upon our planet's bosom ;
For nebulous vapors far away,
On optic glasses looming,
Are garden-beds of nascent worlds
Like banks of violets blooming.

O Force of forces, Heart of hearts
In central mystery beating ;
Though everywhere in star and clod,
From eye of sense retreating ;—
The forms that fade are still renewed ;
The fire of life burns ever ;
Thee from the glowing universe
Nor time nor space can sever.

PHANTASMAGORIA.

SILENCE rustles as with snowflakes,
Softly, softly, falling, falling,
Ceaseless, endless, lonesome, dreary.
Through the silence rise up faces,
Slowly rise up and dilating
As with heat of oven redden ;
Features fierce, exaggerated,
Dreadful, menacing, and cruel
Into grins Titanic breaking,

Vanish slowly as they rise up,
In the distance fading, waning.

Lions from the crags of Atlas
With their shaggy, tawny tresses,
With a stern regard gaze at you
In familiar rooms and places
Motionless in long rows standing ;
And white elephants of Ava !
Follow in enorm procession
With their trunks like serpents writhing.
Audibly the silence rustles,
Endless Parthenonian friezes,
Amazons with lunar targes
Empty from their steeds their quivers,
With a thunderous hoof-beat charging.

Browless idiot, brazen statue
On its pedestal revolving
In a vast cathedral standeth,
While with falchion drawn he shouteth,
As a mighty hammer clanging
Bangs the hours on silver anvil,
In the solemn, glimmering midnight.

See all round in mighty circle
All suffused with crimson splendor
Fairest dames on palfreys mounted,
Clad in green with golden bugles.
Fabled Glorianes, Alcinas,
Cleopatras, Bella Donnas,

Shapes of Titian and Murillo
With an Andalusian peach-bloom.
On their cheeks and lips like roses.
May-winds stir their silken tresses ;
Fountains sing with misty shimmer ;
Beauty-burdened prance the palfreys,
Till the witching pomp is conjured
Sudden from the trancèd vision.

AT THE GRAVE OF HAWTHORNE.

Every living man triumphs over every dead one, as he lies poor and helpless under the mould, a pinch of dust, a heap of bones, an evil odor ! I hate the thought ! It shall not be so. —*Septimius Felton.*

LEVEL with the clods which hide him
Lies the stone that bears his name ;
Here, then, found its gate of exit
So much genius, so much fame.

That imperial brow, which brooded
So profoundly on man's lot,
Mouldering and unsightly relic
Hallows now this lonely spot.

Lampless now the great eye-sockets
Once so luminous with thought ;
Stalwart frame and noble features
Slow corruption brings to naught.

Lives he in his volumes only,
Or has dream of faith proved true,
So that now his freed self roameth
Fresher fields and pastures new?

Mystic, dreamer, self-communer,
Lonely places loved he well,
Where, himself unseen, he yielded
To imagination's spell.

Floating on his storied river
Far away from town and tower
'Neath the autumn's yellow leafage,
Mused he many a lonely hour.

Or in long, long days of summer
Dreamed he, no intruder near,
While the monotone of ocean,
With its surf-beat, lulled his ear.

At his potent evocation
Dim past yielded up its dead.
Live again upon his pages,
Men and ages long since fled.

Primitive races semi-human,
Such as old Etruria bore,
At the summons of his genius
In their old haunts live once more.

Stern New England's son and poet,
His her past is evermore ;
He—her *genius loci*—haunteth
Inland mountain, wave-swept shore.

Great Carbuncle gleameth southward
In the middle watch of night,
O'er dark wastes of pine and hemlock
Sends afar its mystic light.

Waved his wand and Cromwell's warriors
Hoar with age and exile stand
Andros and his minions awing,
With a gesture of command.

Fount of Youth, time's furrows smoothing,
In his weird tales makes he flow,
Back their pristine beauty giving
Withered belles of long ago.

How the vast and silent night sky
Over guilt he stretches grim,
On its penal outlook standing
'Neath the constellations dim !

How the weird, primeval forests,
As they stood in days of yore,
Demon haunted on his pages,
Darkling wave for evermore.

Poor and helpless seems the dead man
In the dust abased full low,
Whatso'er his fame or genius,
Lethe's waters o'er him flow.

Onward moves the world unpausing,
Him—his era—leaves behind ;
Newer names, ideals, fashions,
Blot him from the current mind.

Still if Hawthorne lives, no longer
Is he thrall of fate and death,
Somewhere in the universe he
Draweth now immortal breath,

In a nobler, grand hereafter,
Where to their full stature grow
Lofty natures who in earth-life
Only exile, sadness know.

Such continuance, haply, Hawthorne
On a changeless strand has found ;
Fain for him we dream such future
Bending o'er his lowly mound.

But than gorgeous mausoleum
Is this pine-clad ridge more meet,
Where the woods, he loved, low dirges
In each breeze, that sighs, repeat.

YOUTHFUL POEMS.

YOUTHFUL POEMS.

TO MY WIFE.

I.

ERE thou wert seen, and ere I knew
  Such loveliness on earth unfolded,
A morning dream revealed to view
  That shape in perfect beauty moulded ;
Around thy graceful waist, methought,
  The fabled Zone of Love was glowing,
The cestus with enchantment fraught,
  A charm, that vanquished all, bestowing—
The phantom fled, but evermore
  Until thyself I might discover,
Its memory in my heart I bore,
  Of shade impalpable the lover.

II.

When eastward thou wert long sojourning,
  From me divided and afar,
Though sunset in the West was burning,
  I turned where shone my being's star ;

Beyond the woods, the village spires,
  Adown the broadly flowing river
My glances winged by wild desires
  To pierce the distance, would endeavor ;
Each bickering train which eastward rolled,
  Each trailing cloud that thither flew,
As long as eyesight could behold,
  I followed, musing still of you ;—

III.

Of you, the magnet of my heart,
  The vision of my nightly slumber,
Of all my thoughts the central part,
  And source of fancies without number.
The stars are not more dear to Night,
  To scented winds the bursting blossom,
To Day its floods of golden light,
  Than thou art, gentlest, to my bosom.
The beauty of the North is thine,
  Its auburn tress, its eye of azure,
Its rose-hued cheek, whose freshness Time
  Leaves blooming long without erasure.

IV.

Incarnate in thy graceful form,
  I see that sweet Göthéan vision,
That dream of beauty soft and warm,
  Which folded Faust in joy elysian.
Though clouds disturb the blue serene,
  And storm and darkness round me lower,

Thy presence is a sunny gleam,
A bow of promise 'mid the shower ;
Though from me fortune fall away,
By Hope itself disowned, forsaken,
Whilst thou art spared by pale decay,
I rest in peace, secure, unshaken.

INSCRIPTION.

LITHE ivy, let thy gliding foliage shade
This urn, where Shelley's sacred dust is laid,
Whose fire was quenched beneath the angry sea,
That laves the sunny shores of Italy !
The Elements did moan around his bier.
In him they lost their best interpreter—
For his most subtile, sympathizing frame
Was as a sweet melodious instrument,
Through all whose pores and million channels went
The Universe into his heart and brain
In musical influxes, that ebbed amain
From out his lips, in verse of power to tame
A tiger's heart, or suage an angel's pain.
Through his well-jointed reeds the circling gyres
Of planets poured in song their soft desires,
And glad ovations, while their vernal dreams
The leaves did whisper, and the clouds and streams
And winds their fluent exultations pour,
With sky-pavilioned ocean's organ-roar.

THE TEUTONIC MINSTREL'S TOMB.

FAR north they say there lies a wizard land,
Which has above it all the changeless year
A silver-shining, milk-warm atmosphere,
Amid whose windless calm the forests stand
As still as clustered obelisks. A bland
Delight is shed o'er all who enter here ;
And by a lonely path their way they steer
Through dreamy hollows, under forests grand
Of larch and fir, round many a placid mere,
O'er silver streams and level barrens drear.
At length they come unto a mossy gate,
And find within a city desolate ;
Its streets knee-deep with yellow leaves are strown,
And stiller than the Ephesian Sleeper's cave.
The watchman's horn at midnight lies unblown,—
The ivy-muffled bells hang dumb, and save
The noise of summer flies, sound there is none.
Wide open stands the Kaiser's palace door,
And here and there, upon the dusty floor,
Swords, helms, and spears, and empty wine-cups lie
Between whose golden lips black spiders ply
Their filmy looms in bright security.
Within this city, reared by Elfin hands,
A huge and mouldering mausoleum stands.
These words are graved upon its portals gray,—
The Singer of the Nibelungen Lay.

INVOCATION.

O PLACID Death! O lotos-circled king!
Parent of rest and endless slumbering!
With downy-sandalled pace approach me now,
And bathe my lips and palpitating brow
From flagons full of cool Lethean spray,
For I am weary of the light of day.
Or call to Sleep, thy mild dejected twin,
And when the rosy-fingered Morn shall rise,
Will ye aloft upon the healthy wind,
That blows from out her dewy balconies,
Waft me to those calm isles, whose tribes obey
Sky-fallen Saturn's ever peaceful sway!

TO W. P. R.

THE links of amity that bind
Our souls together evermore,
Are forged as strong as those that joined
The brave and beautiful of yore.

Though many a valley-darkening hill
And ocean billow may divide,
My heart retains thine image still,
Through every change of time and tide.

Though lapsing years are friendship's bane,
And absence brings forgetfulness,
Yet these exert their might in vain,
They cannot make our love the less.

Across the billows of the sea,
Where rolls the legend-haunted river,
My dreaming spirit flies to thee,
Like arrow drawn from Phœbus' quiver.

About thy hearth-stone, dim and cold,
Forsaken Lares droop and moan ;
They miss the faces, that of old
Within their joyous precincts shone.

Full soon the halls of Dis shall hide
Both thee and me and all we love,
For, bubbles on a rushing tide,
Our evanescent beings move.

While yet the stars above us shine,
And youth and hope and love remain,
O pilgrim, seek thy natal clime,
And glad my heart and eyes again!

MONODY OF THE COUNTESS OF NETTLESTEDE.

OVERNAL sun, how cold thy beams to me!
Since they can never more illume
His face, my heart's idolatry,
That now, alas! immersed in urnal gloom,
Far, far below thy golden glances lies,
Wrapt from these yearning arms and weeping eyes!
In vain for me, sweet flowers, ye reassume
Your vestments rare of oriental dyes;
Your subtle fragrance and your glorious bloom
But call to mind a sweeter far than you—
My Prince and Lord, My Beautiful and True,
Whose cheek was burnished with as bright a hue
As decks your leaves, whose eyes were wont to shine
Upon my glowing face like stars benign.
Again I hear the South wind's murmurs low
Making the earth with life and beauty glow,
But now more icy than the Sarsar's breath,
In deserts old the minister of death,
Around my worn and wasted frame it sighs,
Recalling soft Elysian memories.

How oft engraven in the oaken rind,
My hapless name with his I see entwined.
Dear hand, that carved these love knots, 'neath the
mould
Thou now, alas! art shrunken, pulseless, cold!
And has he left the world forevermore,
That still contains his ill-starred paramour?
Oh, woe is me! O sickening, keen distress!
O solemn, strange, and mighty loneliness!
That makes to issue from my riven breast
Sob after sob of anguish unrepressed
And irrepressible, till, nerveless down,
My cold limbs sink upon the sun-warm ground.—
Thence up aloft I gaze with yearning eyes
Into the vast and azure-flowing skies,
Far, far beyond whose airy curtains stand
The many mansions of the angel land.
There, girt with seraphs sits the mother mild,
And there in glory reigns her sinless child.
O Holy One! Thy countenance benign
Unto thy weary worshipper incline!
My lonely spirit quickly call away
From earth, and its pale tenement of clay!
The sunlit hills, woods, vales, and waters clear,
And home and household faces once so dear—
All these fair sights since his departure seem
Mournful and strange,—a vision and a dream.
O Saviour merciful! whate'er his fate
Beyond the grave, let me participate.
If garmented in light, he walks serene
By thy still waters, through thy pastures green,

My soul make pure so long by sin defiled,
And, raised to heaven, acknowledge me thy child!
But if, Erinnys-like, the bloody Doom,
That here on earth pursued him to the tomb,
Lured by his sins relentless pass beyond,
And hunt him to the gulfs of woe profound,
Together let our erring sprites be hurled
Afar into some sad autumnal world—
Some land of withered leaves and sighing winds,
Where twined in one we may bewail our sins!
Father in Heaven, forgive this impious prayer!
Thou know'st it rises from my deep despair,
Be merciful unto my wretched state—
Indeed, indeed, I am unfortunate!
Far, far from me the loved one buried lies—
His sepulchre unknown to these dim eyes—
In that sad chapel, whose dark aisles contain
Full many a haughty heart and guilty brain,
Beauty and strength resolved to dust again.
There languish now henceforth in dull decay
Those eyes, that glistened with a star-like ray.
From his blanched lip and cheek forevermore
Fades the fresh rose which blossomed there before.
Gory and dank, bereft of all their grace
His tresses hang about his marble face—
Not as of old, when flowing unconfined,
Their odors wooed the amorous summer wind.
Livid and blue those beauteous lips, whose kiss,
The seal of love, imparted perfect bliss.
The rosy twilights and the moons of May,
Beneath whose beams we loved the hours away,

Are gone—and gone the ruddy ember-gloom,
That filled with lurid light our silent room,
When o'er our hall the wintry tempest flew,
And love our yearning hearts together drew.
My stay, my life, my hope, my star is gone—
And I am left in sorrow and alone ;
The oak is stricken from the vine's embrace,
And on the earth its tendrils run to waste !

LUCIFER REDUX.

PRINCE of the fallen stars,
Thy front shall lose its scars !
The fires shall cease to burn,
Thy legions shall return !

A ray shall pierce the gloom,
A voice dissolve the doom ;
The victor shall relent,
The brazen chains be rent !

The demon's crown of woe
No more shall gird thy brow ;
The fires shall cease to burn,
Thy legions shall return.

The dark pavilions spread
Within thy kingdom dread ;
The palaces of pain,
Like dreams, shall melt and wane.

And Heaven's flag unrolled,
Again thy helm enfold ;
The fires shall cease to burn,
Thy legions shall return !

The mystic feud shall end,
Thy willing knees shall bend ;
Once more the central throne
Thine homage bright shall own.

In Heaven thy starred domain
Shall greet its chief again ;
The fires shall cease to burn,
Thy legions shall return !

Thine ancient halls of state,
So long left desolate,
Shall ring with joy once more,
Shall bloom with wreath and flower.

The constellations bright,
The sentinels of night,
Around thy steps shall chant
A pæan jubilant.

The wheels that o'er thee drove,
The sword thy mail that clove,
Shall lead thy glad return,
Before thy march shall burn !

ANSALDO'S GARDEN.

BEAUTIFUL the hearts that beat
'Neath the frosts of age,
Still with fervent, youthful heat,
Tempered in its rage.

Teian-like, they laugh and sing,
Though the shadows gather ;
For they feel the warmth of spring
In the wintry weather.

Minstrels 'neath the snows of time
Feel their bosoms glowing,
With a fervor as sublime
As when flowers were blowing

Like to tomb-lamps' beams, that spread
Lustre round decay,
To the last their hearts will shed
Sunlike halos, fancies gay.

Thus Ansaldo's garden bloomed,
June in January set,
While the frosty stars illumed
Orange leaf and mignonette.

TO RUFUS CHOATE.

I.

THOU mortal Belial! thee I name
The mightiest sophist known to fame.
In the old Hellenic isles,
Rich in rhetoric's winning wiles,
'Mongst their most persuasive dead,
None like thee was ever bred;
E'en the Ithacensian's lips
Thou couldst cast into eclipse;
Nor serpent's eye, nor siren's lute,
Nor Coptic Lotos' magic fruit,
Could bewilder and entrance,
Like thy honied utterance.

II.

Shadowed thick with jetty hair
Flowing like acanthus fair
Over pillared capital,
Towers aloft thy kingly brow;
While from sunken eyes below
Gleams a fiery southern glance,
Keener far than keenest lance.

III.

These, with that Ionic form,
And Asiatic fancy warm,
Assembled and conjoined in one,
Make the Forum's paragon!

TO THE CRICKET.

FLOURISHES in song immortal
The Cicada famed of old ;
On the brows of Attic women
Was its likeness worn in gold.

But, my Cricket ! none have praised thee,
Insect full of dulcet mirth !
Singing in the August moonlight,
Minstrel of the country hearth !

Sharded rhapsodist of Autumn,
When the year begins to wane,
In the grass and in the hedges
Trillest thou thy wiry strain.

Harp with clasps of ivory strengthened,
Unto thee does not belong ;
Thine own body is a cithern,
Its pulsations make thy song.

In the midnight weird and holy,
When the moon is in eclipse,
Feedest thou on leaves of moly—
Honeydew-drops steep thy lips.

DEPARTING SUMMER.

'NEATH the rainy Equinox,
Flooding her dishevelled locks,
Lies the Summer dead and cold,
With her shroud about her rolled,
Like the drowned Ophelia fair,
Dripping from the oozy mere ;
O'er her bleaching corse complain
Sighing winds and chilling rain.

Withered fillets, garlands sere,
Bind her brow and deck her bier—
Urnlike lilies, violets frail,
Faded blossoms of the vale,
Thickly strew her loosened hair.

Sorrowing o'er his daughter fair,
Sadly bends the stricken Year,
To her lips applies his ear ;
For the voice which long ago
Cheered him with its music low,
Hearkens he, and for the smile
Wont his dotage to beguile,
Lifts her drooping lids in vain,—
She will never smile again.

Ravished from their mistress pale,
Fly her tresses on the gale ;

Driving North winds pipe and rave
Threnodies about her grave.
Bird and leaf forsake the tree—
Sinks to rest the yellow bee ;
All his labors in the sun,
All his airy voyages done ;
While the squirrel gathers fast
Largess of the bough and blast.

HELLENICS.

HELLENICS.

HELLAS.

FAR up the vistas of the past she stands,
The glorious Hellas, mid her vine-clad isles.
The sword and epic lyre are in her hands,
Wherewith the tribes of men she still beguiles.

Behind her, long-drawn serried columns gleam
Uplifting strength and beauty richly wrought,
While marble altars waft a fragrant steam
Of Orient myrrh from lands of morning brought.

The volumed vapors roll in light away
O'er isle-sown sea and temple-crested shore,
While oread-haunted in her summer's ray,
Her thymy mountains tower for evermore.

Thus stands she ever to the inner eye
With hero's falchion and with poet's shell,
Shedding adown the ages 'neath each sky
The potent effluence of her wizard spell.

THE GREEK.

MEASURE and proportion speak
In all fabrics of the Greek.
In his most impassioned glow
Loyal still to reason he ;
Bounds of fitness, harmony,
Careful not to overflow.

Of good sense anointed priest
Spurned he the delirious East ;
Epic, lyric, temple chaste
Charm ear and eye with faultless taste,
Eschewing outlines vague and dim,
Method, not madness, guided him.

From Babels, cavern-temples far,
Dwelt he 'neath the Evening Star ;
His shrines of marble, chiselled gems
Forelands crowned like diadems
Chastely, soberly, he wrought,
Master of reflective thought ;
Sane in body, sane in mind,
Breathing the Ægean wind,
Saltness of his loved sea-wave
To his wit sharp flavor gave ;
Beauty was his constant norm—
Hated he all things deform—

Vagueness and unoutlined haze
Vanished in Apollo's rays.
In his Sea's clear hyaline
Crags of purple mirrored shine ;
In each fibre human he
Spurned the East's hyperbole.
His very gods—immortal men—
Dwelt within their votaries' ken.
Scent of bee-browsed mountain thyme
Do his verses sweet exhale.
Clearness of his lucid clime
In his thought did never fail.

THE IONIAN GREEK.*

JAVAN, Ion or Iouni,
Thus the tribes Semitic called him,
Dwelt upon the isles and coastlands,
At the mouths of famous rivers.

Inland pined he for the breezes,
For the briny scent and sparkle
Of his azure, loved Thalatta,
Of his tideless, midland ocean—

* The Ionian Greek is called in the Bible Javan. By the Persians and Egyptians he was known as Iouni. Hating priesthoods and monarchies, he was everywhere at war with the spirit of Asia. The modern world, with its arts, sciences, trade, rationalism, restless spirit of inquiry and democracy, is thoroughly Ionian.

With its misty vague horizon,
Opening unobstructed pathways
To remotest, unknown regions,
Climes of marvel and adventure.

Temple-crested were his cities,
Crowned with fanes on high crags seated,
With their rows of marble pillars,
Serried Propylæan columns,
Far off 'gainst the blue sky gleaming,
And their tutelary *daimons*,
Powers of earth and sea and ether,
On their bulwarks standing lordly,
Panoplied in sunbright armor,
Giant-limbed, erect and haughty,
With defiance for the foeman.

Javan's form was lithe and noble,
Suppled by palæstric conflict
And heroic games to manhood
Of the finest, firmest fibre ;
And his speech like music sounded ;
And his eyes were dark and lustrous ;
Lightning-like with flashing glances ;
And his brain with thought was teeming,—
Fiery, subtle, nimble-witted,
Darkest problems swiftly clearing ;
And his quickly-stirred emotions
To the world of sense responding,
Like an aspen to the zephyr ;
Vibrant, tremulous all over,

Gushed in sweetest lyric numbers ;
While the dactyl and the spondee
Of his glowing epic rhapsode
Rolled and swelled like summer ocean
In melodious surf-beat pulsing
On the gleamy crags and forelands.

Hither, thither Javan roaming
Gazed upon the outer nations,
Heard their raucous, dissonant jargons,
Saw their tents and noisome dwellings,
Caverns, holes and wagon-houses
And their idols blood-bespattered,
Blood of slaughtered, shipwrecked strangers ;
Curled his lips with scorn and loathing,
With disdain his nostrils quivered,
As with haughty glance he eyed them.
Barbaroi the word he uttered
Henceforth to the rabble races,
Low-browed, prognathous and brutish,
Like their skins to cling forever.

Other sailors were before him
On the inner, outer ocean
Hunting for the royal purple,—
But the Ionian quick outsailed them,
With his lighter, trimmer galleys,
Drove them from each mart and haven,
With his finer wares and fabrics,
Oil and purple island vintage ;
Founded nobler, fairer cities,

O'er their shapeless, wandering Melkarth
Reared his ever-young Apollo,
Radiant, musical, far-shining.
And the Scyth his fleeces brought him
Soaked in golden-sanded rivers,
Till with precious ore they sparkled ;
And the Teuton brought his amber
Vomited by Baltic surges ;
And the Libyan his ivory,
Gold dust, spices, gorgeous feathers ;
And the Celt his tin like silver,
To the beach to trade and barter
With the keen Ionian skipper
For nick-nacks from isles of Javan.

Beauteous youth, on dolphin riding
O'er the sparkling briny billows,
With a lyre and Tripod laden,
Was the emblem of the Ionian
To the outer, ruder races.
With his lyre he witched and tamed them ;
On his Tripod throned and seated,
With prophetic breath he guided
Kings, republics, as he listed.

In his Agora discussion
First its ringing voice uplifted
Terrorizing kings and tyrants.
Politics were his invention ;
Civic freedom's primal impulse
He imparted to the nations

Foremost democrat and modern.
From the loins of old Phocæa
Sprang Marseilles, where rang the pæan,
Rang the battle-chant melodious
Of old Demos re-arisen,
Into flame the nations kindling.
Thus the Ionian, not the Hebrew,
Was the moulder of the present,
Blind belief, tradition spurning
He investigated nature,
With an eye by reason guided.

In his radiant, marble cities,
With their theatres hypæthric,
Schools and courts and free assemblies ;
With their arsenals and dockyards,
Merchants, artists, politicians,
Sophists, parasites and rhetors,
Strangers, idlers, schemers, quidnuncs ;
With their barber-shops and Leschae,*
Bubbling with the latest scandal—
Rolled the current of existence,
Sparkling, hurried, foaming, rushing,
As to-day it rolls and rushes
In the cities of the present.

* In German, *Conversations-haus.*

MYTHS FROM HOMER.

NIOBE.

[Iliad, Twenty-fourth Book.]

I.

IN stanchless tears, lone Niobe
  Among the Phrygian hills,
With forehead bowed upon her knee,
  Her marble heart distils
For those fair daughters of her pride,
  By Dian's arrows slain,
Whose clustered beauty hers outvied,
  And showed their starry strain ;
For those six sons of stateliest mien,
  Whom shafts of Phœbus slew—
So fast around the hapless queen
  The immortal arrows flew
From vengeful quivers ; there she stood,
  Transfixed in voiceless woe ;
Around her all her glorious brood
  Like flowers of spring laid low.

II.

Nine days they mouldered where they fell—
  To bury them was none ;

For Zeus had, with petrific spell,
The people turned to stone.
Descending then from thrones of air
The Sons of Ether came,
And, pitying, made the dead their care,
And lit the funeral flame.

III.

Thus, while her children were inurned,
The mother's lips no moan
Escaped ; then Zeus in mercy turned
Her also into stone.
And still in Sipylus, they say,
Among the lonely hills,
In tears, which time can ne'er allay,
Her marble heart distils.

NOTE ON NIOBE.

The lines entitled "Niobe" are a translation in part of the beautiful account of that famous mythical queen, which Homer, in the 24th book of the Iliad, puts into the mouth of Achilles while conversing with his guest, the aged Priamus. If the Greek legend of Niobe had never given birth to anything else in literature or art than Byron's apostrophe to Rome in "Childe Harold"—

"The Niobe of nations ! there she stands
Childless and crownless in her voiceless woe,
An empty urn within her withered hands,
Whose holy dust was scattered long ago"—

it would deserve the immortality which keeps it forever memorable. It seems that the myth of Niobe originated from a

freak of nature still visible among the Phrygian mountains of Lesser Asia. Dr. Ernst Curtius, the latest and best historian of primitive Greece, whose intimate acquaintance with the physical geography of the regions which composed the old Hellenic world makes him such a luminous expositor of Grecian legend and history, says in his "History of Greece" (vol. i., page 81, of the English translation republished in this country): "As a documentary reminiscence of the myths proper to these regions (between the valley of the Hermus and the bay of Smyrna), there gleams even at the present day, at two hours' distance from the ancient Magnesia, in the sunken depth of rock, the sitting form of a woman, bending forward in her grief, over whom the water drops and flows ceaselessly. This is Niobe, the mother of the Phrygian mountains, who saw her happy offspring, the rivulets, till they were carried away (evaporated) by the dry heat of the sun." Another writer says the Niobe on Mt. Sipylus, which is mentioned in the Iliad, is a rude effigy in the valley of the Hermus, near Magnesia. A correspondent of a London journal, who visited this valley several years ago, and climbed up the heights to make a sketch of Niobe, is confident that the figure is the result of human labor, and not caused by the hand of nature. Some of the fingers can still be traced, but not a feature of the face can be distinguished. The effigy is in a sitting position, with the rude representation of a chair. The figure seems to have been well known to the great Greek writers—to Sophocles and Callimachus, for instance, the former of whom gives a beautiful poetical description of it in his tragedy of Antigone. Apropos of this figure, one wonders what immortal myth the ancient Greek imagination would have made to blossom from such a freak of nature as the old stone face on Profile Mountain.

THE CRANES.

[Iliad, Third Book.]

FUGITIVES from wintry weather,
Gusts that rave and flooding rains,
Low in air, with raucous clamor,
Fly in files the migrant cranes;
Fly they southward to the margin
Of the ocean-river;
Speed to Pygmy land, where beameth
Summer's sheen forever.

There the swart men, sunburnt, blameless,
In their festive portals
Yearly spread for Zeus the banquet—
Zeus and his immortals.
Past them feasting, deep and mighty,
Rolls the ocean streaming;
Far away their halls ambrosial,
Golden mansions gleaming.

Hebe poureth not the nectar,
Lonely Hera sleepeth,
And the Muses' choir deserted,
Silent, songless keepeth
Till the twelve days' feast is over,
When the gods, returning,
Leave the Earth's far southern border
For Olympus yearning.

THE MUSES.

[Iliad, First Book.]

THROUGH all the long, Olympian day
In Homer's verse they sing for aye,
Jove's nine unwedded daughters fair,
With golden fillets round their hair.

Aloof from sound of earthly moan,
With measured step and measured tone,
The hearts of gods they made to glow,
While earth and ocean stretched below,
In storm and shine, their festal joy,
And lyre-god's spell and nectar's flow
O'er sorrow, pain and death upbuoy.

Polymnia, immortal legends told,
Rose-crowned, with ringing harp of gold.
Diviner minds to sons of song
She gave than stirred the common throng;
To them imparting mystic lore,
Great deeds and men of days of yore.

With rapt and starward lifted eye
Urania pored upon the sky,
While Clio kept on scrolls sublime
The register of vanished time.

In groves and glens bards prayed to thee
To teach them secret of the spell
Which hovered round thy golden shell,
O lyric maid, Melpomene!

The festal sisters all the time
Held not Olympian heights sublime.
When spread ambrosial night its shade,
To mortals oft descents they made.
To Hesiod, dreaming 'mong his flocks,
With winged and noiseless steps they came,
Illumining Bœotia's rocks.

Amid the dewy darkness lone
Their voices rose in choral hymn,
While awed earth echoed every tone;
The awakened poet caught the flame
Of song thus in the midnight dim.

Keeping unsoiled their sandals bright,
To their eternal homestead then
From earth, lowlying haunt of men,
The Muses soared with buoyant flight.

The Olympian revel rang again
With voices in alternate strain;
Bloomed Hebe's brow with violets bound,
While nectared goblets circled round,
And swept his chords the bright day long,
The golden-shafted King of Song.*

* Apollo Musagetes, the leader of the choir of the Muses, whose statue may be seen in most Art Museums.

HOMER'S ANTHROPOMORPHISM.

ALL things were, in world of Homer,
Conscious, purposive, like man :
Notion of insentient nature
In a later age began.
Blue sky was a giant godhead
With ambrosial, beamy hair :
Earth, all-bearing, flower-tressed mother,
Lay beneath him green and fair.

Ocean was a hoary father
With his blue arms stretching wide
To receive the streams and rivers,
As they to his bosom glide.
'Neath the rough bark of the forests
Lovely Dryads darkling dwelt ;
Oft for mortal youths emotions
Sweet of love and longing felt.

Pouted coral lips of Naiads
Up through fountains and through streams ;
Oreads swift through glade and forest
Flitting seemed the lunar beams.
Striding o'er the mountain ridges
Quivered maid and huntress bright,
Roamed the Moon, with silver arrows
Putting stags and boars to flight.

Winds and beams and swaying branches
And the cascade's fitful sound
Mythic fancy deemed the noise of
Shouting nymph and baying hound.
O'er the urns of famous rivers
Manlike figures pensive hung
Far aloof in mountain caverns,
While to light their waters sprung.

Had each lonely isle of ocean
Genius loci, damsel fair
Spell-bound mortal voyagers keeping,
Whom the wild waves landed there.
In the morning-red dwelt Eös,
Who the dewy dawn-light gave;
'Mid a cloud of roses drove she
From the ocean's orient wave:

Phosphor sparkled bright before her,
While the wind of morning blew;
Turned to pearls on flower and grass-blade
At her coming midnight's dew.
* * * * *
Nought of our insentient forces
Primitive poet, Homer, knew,—
Saw he *will* behind each movement
Which his eager vision drew,
Knew he not the earth which bore him
Was a flying ship of space,
Tender of a mighty orb, which kindled
Air to brightness with its rays.

He in terms of will and feeling
Sang of all things which he saw ;
Countless gods beheld he swaying
Earth and man by whim, not law ;
Fair humanities enthroned he
Over mountains, vales, and streams ;
Skyey archer's golden arrows
Deemed he roseate morning's beams.

Dewdrops as of dawn eternal
On the myths of Homer lie :
Back from age of science, reason,
To his fable-world we fly ;
In his beauteous dreams, illusions
Bathe as in some fount of youth ;
Gladly barter for their freshness
All the trophies won by Truth.

But to Homer, too, did conscience
Teach the lore of right and wrong.
Dictates of the higher reason
Dominate his epic song :
E'en his gods, like men, a higher
Power than their own wills did own,
Not in terms of mortal nature
To be imaged or made known.

HOMERIC CREMATION.

WHEN, mid battles' din of yore,
Hero, gashed with wounds, might fall,
Mourning comrades would implore
Æolus in breezy hall.

Heard the Lord of Winds their prayer—
Sent his blustering vassals forth,
Tempesting the sea and air—
Zephyr, Eurus, chilling North.

Swelled the roused sea 'neath their breath,
Hurried clouds along the sky,
Till upon the scene of death
Stooped they from their pathway high,

Where, upon his lofty pyre,
Smeared with balsams, lay the dead ;
Crackled at their breath the fire,
Resinous odors flashing shed.

Drenched with wine was all the ground,
In ungrudged libations poured,
Invocations sad resound,
All day long the fierce flames roared—

Till, exhaled in azure air,
Features, form, had vanished quite,
Leaving as residuum there
Only bones and ashes white.

Urned in brass, with cairn o'erpiled,
These in earth with tears were laid ;
Naught corruption there defiled—
Found thus rest the hero's shade.

Thus the corse in history's morn
Festered not in dull decay,
But, on wings of flame upborne,
Into pure air passed away.

MOUNT IDA, TO-DAY.

[Suggested by a graphic sketch of an ascent of the old Homeric mountain by a party of young Americans.]

RINGS in gorges of Mount Ida
Woodman's keen axe as of yore—
Down its steep ravines the torrents
Swelled by rains of autumn pour,
While its dark-boughed pines 'neath scourges
Of wild Thracian Boreas roar.
As with many folds and fountains
High its billowy ridges soar
Upward, upward, till its summit
Looketh wide earth o'er and o'er.

Thither through the blue air rolling
Mount the mists the sea exhales—
Shape of vanished god and goddess
Takes each light wreath, as it sails,
Till upon the far peak resting,
Steeped in azure sky-hues bright,
Seem they gods once more assembled,
Hera, Zeus, and Aphrodite.

Gone, old Mount, are Jove and Homer,
And Œnone, lovelorn, fair,
While for gods our eyes mistake not
Cloud-shapes climbing summer air.
Meet we not in glade and thicket,
As we up thy sides aspire,
Venus, as young Paris met her,
When she thrilled him with desire.

Disenchanted is our vision—
Vainly strive we to behold
Gods and Nymphs of air and river,
Such as Homer saw of old ;
These are vanished, but thy vast bulk
Pine-clad soareth grandly still,
As with deafening din thy torrents
Ears of climbing tourists fill.

When upon thy bare crest stand they
Boundless views their eyes enchant,
All the Troad, Chios, Lesbos,
Fairest isles of the Levant,

Plain of Ilios, as it lay when
Thee his watchtower high Jove made,
Gazing on Achaians, Trojans
There in conflict fierce arrayed,—

Curtained with thick air caressed he
Herè on thy southmost height ;
Broke thy hard cliffs into blossom,
Hyacinth and crocus bright,
Couch of flowers swift improvising
For the Thunderer in his need,
Where to love and slumber yielding
Saw he not his Trojans bleed,

Double-fountained, famed Skamandros,
From thy caverned base still leapeth
And with din of rushing water
Loud its flowery precinct keepeth.
Still the crocus, mosses, grasses
Wet are with its flying spray,—
Round the cradle of the river
Cascades foam and swift springs play.

But the tanks of stone, where washed their
Shining garments Troja's daughters
In the days of peace, no longer
Brimmed are with Skamander's waters.
Save for Nature's pleasant noises
All is peaceful, silent, lone,
Here where life once pulsed so fiercely
In the misty foretime flown.

But great Ida's crest at sunset
Rose-hued, lovely shines afar,
And anear it bright as ever
Flames the torch of evening's star.
Woods and streams have quite forgotten
Naiads, fauns they knew of yore—
Troy was but a fleeting shadow,
Nature fresh is evermore.

THE SHIELD OF ACHILLES.

THE constellations rise and set
In Homer's mighty line,
And through the rifted clouds of war
The harvest-moon doth shine.
On clustering grapes and golden sheaves
Soft rain its mellow rays,
While through the festal city's streets
The nuptial torches blaze.

In Homer's world not all the air
With trumpet-notes is stirred ;
Soft undertones of pastoral pipes
In contrast sweet are heard.
Pictures of peaceful life are strown
His Ilian war-song o'er—
Hoarded in memory's golden urn,
Gathered from sea and shore.

All sights and sounds of earth and sky
  Were garnered in his brain;
The life of the heroic world
  Lives ever in his strain.
As if in irony, the shield
  The Phthian hero bore
With georgic, pastoral images
  Was thickly graven o'er.

There, wrought in gold, Ionia's heaven
  With mimic splendor shone;
The Pleiads, Hyads—all the stars
  To Grecian vision known.
The furrow darkens, though of gold,
  The ploughman's tread behind;
The ripened cornfields' yellow ears
  Roll billowing in the wind.

Blithely the vintage figures move
  With dancing steps along,
Their voices, limbs, responsive to
  The pipe and vintage song.
With many a furtive, sweet caress,
  The youths and maidens glide
'Neath osier baskets, cluster-piled,
  Oozing a purple tide.

Through the dance of Ariadne
  In swift revolving whirls,
Fly the youths with daggers gleaming,
  And glossy vested girls.

Haply through its dædal mazes
The bard himself had wound,
In moonlit Gnossus, by the spell
Of Cretan beauty bound.

Long ere he rolled his orbs in vain
And found not earth or sky,
While yet sea, isle, and continent
Vibrated through his eye ;
Hanging his soul's ideal hall
With pictures ne'er to fade,
In visioned years of darkness on
Eternal canvas laid.

The very clime of loveliness
And beauty's native air,
Ionia trained her poet's soul
To love of all things fair.
Soft Aphroditè from the foam
Of neighboring Cyprian seas
Rose radiant, near his island home,
Filling with charm the breeze.

Spell-like, the glorious nature wrought
Upon his heart and brain,
That round his island-cradle glowed
In earth and sky and main.
No moods nor phases that she wore
Could 'scape his youthful eye ;
Whispered no breeze, no tempest raved,
That passed unheeded by.

The whole wide earth in miniature
  Was that Ægean world ;
In it the palm and citron grew,
  The Thracian snow-blast whirled.
The nurse of genius it bestowed
  Variety of mood,
Touching the spirit's mystic keys
  With hand now soft, now rude.

Bucolic similes his love
  Of rustic life make plain ;
Evening he calls the time the ox
  Is loosened from the wain.
Over the ploughland yielding corn,
  The veil of dusky night
By Helios at eve is drawn,
  When ocean hides his light.

The chaff-clouds wafted on the wind
  From grain-piled threshing-floor
He pictures, when, with battle-dust,
  His hosts are whitened o'er.
Image a swarming crowd the flies
  Round milking-pails in spring ;
From pastures, sheep-cotes, herdsmen's huts
  His similies he brings,

From solitudes of mountain-glades
  With shepherds' fires aglow,
Which, far to sea, a lonely gleam
  Through night and tempest throw ;

Storm-driven o'er the fishy deep
The sailor sees them blaze;
Helpless towards the wished-for shore
He casts a wistful gaze.

Beneath an oak his farmer stands
The reapers to survey
Watching the sheaves that thickly fall,
A king of rural sway.
Heralds prepare the rustic feast,
The bounteous harvest-cheer,
Unto the wheaten mother pay
The homage of the year.

Thus o'er a song of clashing shields,
Wherein our human life
Is painted as a struggle fierce—
A hell of warring strife—
Sweet rural images are strewn
Amid the wild turmoil,
As stars that calmly shine, though seas
Storm-vexed beneath them boil.

The smithy of the artist-god
Who wrought the wondrous buckler gleamed
With common forge-fire, and his brow
With sweat, like man's while toiling, stream'd.
With pincers, bellows, anvil, sledge,
His miracles he wrought—
Handmaids of gold, articulate,
Self-moved, endowed with thought,

To prop his halting gait whene'er
  Such guest as Thetis came.
Sponging his brawn he hushed at once
  His smithy's roaring flame,
His anvil's clang, his implements
  In chest of silver laid,
In robe of state stalked to his throne
  By golden shoulders stayed.

Willing his art in her behalf
  With utmost skill to ply,
Grateful for refuge when he fell,
  Hurled headlong from the sky,
In Thetis' grot where ocean's stream
  Ran murmuring with foam,
From Herè's wrath he covert found,
  A dimly gleaming home.
Safe in her shielding bosom hid
  The artist child-god wrought,
Nine years, his necklaces and clasps,
  With dædal skill self-taught.

THREE SONNETS.

TO IONIA.

I.

IN summery radiance ever-steeped you lie,
  In far recesses of the foretime young ;
Your clustered isles, whose names are poesy,
Where minstrels of the dawntime loved and sung—

Teos, Chios, cradles of melody !
Samos, where young Pythagoras mused and dreamed ;
Ephesus, o'er which wreathed temple-vapors hung,
From shrine of Artemis, which ever streamed.
Land of voluptuous music, Lydia near
In shadow of auriferous mountains lay,
Where Gyges, Crœsus, wealthy without peer,
Reigned in the dawn of the historic day,
In palaces past which hill-torrents rolled
Their headlong waters bright with grains of gold.

II.

Of old the Persian satraps thee oppressed,
And from thy twelve fair cities tribute drew,
Till Mykale's proud day them overthrew
And with autonomy did re-invest
Thee. In thy years of ruin ruder sway
Hath weighed upon thee than the satraps old.
Thou hast been to the mindless Scyth a prey ;
Only the glorious sky o'er thee unrolled
And sea-waves at thy feet hath he not marred,
Which in their shining depths mirror and lave
Still many a column fair and architrave
Of fallen Branchidæ, templed suburb bright
Of old Miletos, where the God of Light
His holy manor 'gainst profane feet barred.

III.

Herodotus and Homer used your tongue
Limpid as azure of your sea and sky,

And without poet's rhythmus melody.
Siren Aspasia in your soft clime sprung
Winning the mighty heart of Pericles,
With wit and beauty's seldom-mingled charm.
You pampered wayward Alcibiades,
And held his corse when death brought to him calm.
O queenly land! now thou art wan and pale,
Haggard with centuried desolation drear.
Soon may the Crescent o'er thee wane and fail
In dark eclipse, the Scythian disappear
Back to the solitudes of Oxus sent,
Hiding his head 'neath Toorkman's nomad tent.

HELEN AND MENELAUS TRANSLATED TO ELYSIUM.*

OLD was Menelaus, weary,
Earthward bowed by time and fate,
But in face and form of Helen
Beauty bloomed inviolate.

* "It is not thy destiny," said the Old man of the Sea, "O Menelaus! to die in Argos, the pasture ground of horses. You will not meet there with your fate. But the Immortals will send thee to the Elysian Plain and the extreme limits of earth, where blond Rhadamanthus reigns, and where, in an atmosphere unvisited by snow or wintry rain or tempests of thunder and lightning, men enjoy life on the easiest terms. There ocean ever sends shoreward the shrill-blowing west wind to refresh mortals. Thither will they send thee, because you are the husband of Helen and the son-in-law of Jove."—Odyssey, 361–369, Book 4.

Daughter of the gods, still charmed she.
Rustling of her rich attire
Kindled, as she queenly glided
Through her palace, sweet desire.

Far away was hated Ilium—
Walls and turrets mouldered low,
And the ten-years' famous conflict
Memory was of long ago.
She in hollow Lacedæmon
With her loved lord dwelt again ;
All the sad past was forgiven,
With its sorrow, sin, and pain.

With her golden distaff spun she,
'Mong her busy handmaids fair,
Finest yarn from purple fleeces,
Seated in her easy-chair.
Edged with gold a costly basket,
Glittering held her fine-spun thread.
On her chair a gorgeous cushion,
Wove of softest wool, was spread.

With a gracious mien received she
Guests, who, wandering wistful, far
Tidings sought of unreturning
Sires and sons from Troja's war.
In their wine to drown their sorrow
Magic potion would she pour,
Nile's nepenthe, which imbibing
Felt they pangs of grief no more.

Prey of keen remorse was Helen,
Brooding o'er her evil fame ;
Doomed to sin, that prize of beauty
Might be gathered through her shame.
But no anger nor reproaches
From her agèd lord she knew,
As the swift years o'er them fleeted,
Tenderer his passion grew.

"Worthy of thine embrace, Helen,
Canst thou me, a mortal, deem,
Thou with starry twins swan-gendered,
Where Eurotas pours his stream ?
With thy rich, ambrosial tresses,
Which the snows of time defy,
How canst suffer me, hoar winter,
By thy springlike bloom to lie ?

" Useless here, timeworn, I linger—
Went my comrades long ago—
But my vanished youth awaits me,
When to bounds of earth We go.
There the winds of ocean breathing
I my lost might shall regain,
When the Immortals westward send us
To that far Elysian Plain.

" There shall I again grow worthy,
Helen, of thine embrace sweet—
'Neath the sway of Rhadamanthus
Golden hours we there shall fleet.

Haply old heroic comrades
In those blissful meads shall meet,
Hear the music of the billows
On that happy strand that beat."

"Son of Atreus," answered Helen,
"Think not frosts of Eld can wean,
Thick though on thy dear head falling,
From her love for thee, thy queen.
Though the blood of starred Olympos
In me frees from fleshly ill,
And though years have bowed thy stature,
O my lord! I love thee still.

"Even when the vile seducer
Me beyond the sea had borne,
Still remained you loving, loyal,
Though forsaken and forlorn.
Still a queenly wraith I haunted
Then for thee this palace fair,
And where'er your longing glances
Fell in sorrow, I was there.

"Still in slumbers of the midnight
Stretched your yearning arms for me,
And my vanished form before you
Flitting evermore could'st see;
Ingrate were I if devotion
Such as this could cease to move.
Though Old Age's dreary threshold
Thou hast passed, thou hast my love.

"Ne'er on me did'st cast reproaches,
When a-hissing rang my name,
For you knew me thrall of mistress,
Who had triumphed through my shame—
Knew you well that craven Paris
Held I in contempt and scorn ;
Saw you that 'gainst Aphroditè
I was helpless and forlorn.

"Would indeed my wraith had only
Been at Troy, as gossips tell,
While myself, in isle of Pharos,
Naught had known which there befell.
Would that goblets of nepenthe
Draining I had sojourned there,
In that isle of Egypt, weaving
Meanwhile, lotus-garlands fair !"

Thus in high-ceiled, fragrant chamber
Talked they, while the foliage sere
In the fitful autumn night wind
Hither, thither, rustled drear.
Sudden ceased the gust its raving—
Slumbered Helen and the king—
While their valves the palace portals,
As if self-moved, open fling.

With his wand and golden sandals
Entered Hermes, herald bright ;
With him in their stoles of darkness,
Came the sad twins, Sleep and Night.

Lifted they the sleepers gently,
Drowsed with Lethe's balmiest dew,
And to earth's remotest limits
And Elysian Plain they flew.
All night long on sable pinions
Sped they, till a brighter sun
Than illumines earthly mortals,
Made them 'ware their goal was won.

EPIMENIDES, THE CRETAN SLEEPER.

OLD Hellas had its Rip Van Winkle too,
A semi-mythic, half-historic man
Called Epimenides, who slumbered more
Than half a century in a Cretan cave.

Diogenes Laertius narrates
The legend, how his father to the fields
Sent him to look for a lost sheep. Meantime,
Weary with fruitless quest and noontide heat,
The stripling laid him down in a lone cave,
High up upon a mountain side, whose mouth
Looked off to sea, where galleys linen-sailed
From rich Phœnicia's ports were visible
In the long sunny days, dim-gleaming far.
For Crete lay couchant like some mighty beast
Athwart the track of primitive commerce young.
There safely housed from din of men below,
No pathway to his high seclusion leading,
Or only such as Cretan ibex could have scaled,

Perchance some cascade, cavern-born, deepening
His lonely slumbers with its song—he lay
Sleeping a semi-centuried sleep. The hours
Meanwhile rolled over him innocuous,
Furrowing not with wrinkles grim his brow.

The dawn her arrows shot into his cave
Tinging his downy cheek with roseate bloom,
And glossy, unshorn locks with golden gleam.
The fountain murmured on, the still noon made
His breathing audible, if any ear
Had been in that lone cavern dim to listen.

At eve long shafts of dewy moonshine came
Silvering his lips and brow and eyelids o'er,
Till with a weird, transfigured beauty shone
The lonely dreamer's melancholy face.

Spring bloomed and summer glowed and autumn
waned,
And winter moaned in rainy gusts making
The sere leaves eddy rustling round the cave,
And still he slept a calm, unruffled sleep.
Careless of wintry blast or summer beam,
Heedless of mortal change in vales below,
In spacious Gnossos, where his kindred died
Leaving his natal mansion empty, while,
Unconscious heir, he slumbered in the hills,
And spiders in it plied their filmy looms,
And other generations into life
Were born and grew to bearded manhood's prime.
And trod the downward slope to eld and death.

Waking at length his quest he straight resumed,
But quickly found his sleep had lasted till
New faces and new men were dwelling in
The old familiar scenes. What wonder that,
After such marvellous nap, the rumor ran
That Epimenides was of the gods
Beloved, a nympholept, whose lips and brow
Dian had with immortal kisses sealed,
Making them consecrate, in silence of
Some still midsummer night, when dew and moonshine
Sweetened her blandishments? For he had been
A lonely upland-haunting youth, who shunned
The brawling *agora* with its rhetors loud,
And oft had heard the reed notes wild of Pan
And Oread choirs in mountain solitudes.
And so 't was said that Artemis had lulled
Him to that mystical and sacred sleep
Shutting his senses 'gainst the intrusive world,
Feeding his spirit with communion high,
Until he woke by lapse of years unworn
A poet, seer and priest through all the bounds
Of Hellas, master of the mantic art.

His keen prevision by events was shown;
Cities pest-smit were by his counsel healed.
After his treble-centuried life was o'er,
His relics hallowed long the Spartan land.

PHÆDRA.

[Free translation from Euripides.]

FORTH to the air my languid form convey :
Where roams the blithe bee I would fain be straying,
Or on the breezy mountains far away,
Where round my love his deep-mouthed hounds are baying.

There speeds the dappled fawn, the pine-tree there
Its keen aroma ever is exhaling.
Let loose the tresses of my auburn hair,—
Here pent and caged, I feel my life-pulse failing.

Lay my parched lips where under alders flowing
The dewy fountain pours its taintless stream ;
Where o'er the meadow fresh young grass is growing,
And thousand blossoms woo the summer beam.

But chiefly for the mountains yearns my heart :
Therefore, my form uplifting, thither bear ;
My beauteous prince his keen, unerring dart
In woody gorges wild is plying there.

Minion of Dian, he from men afar
A vestal youth in forest shades is leading ;
Upon his leafy couch gaze moon and star ;
His ears are deaf to love-sick passion's pleading.

Would I an Oread were in Dian's train,
Huntress of deer, in arrows keen rejoicing!
Then glimpses of the loved one I might gain,
Where nymphs and hounds the chase's joy are voicing.

THE SINGER (AOIDOS).

LIKE to sun or moon resplendent
Shone the monarch's high-roofed mansion,
With its ivory and amber,
Walls of brass and brazen threshold,
Silver pillars, silver watch-dogs
Ranged in rows to guard the entrance
By Hephæstos wrought with cunning.
Here to light the joyous banquet,
While the Jove-descended monarch
And his guests reclining feasted,
Golden youths on well-built altars
Standing lifted blazing torches;
Here with hollow harp the Singer
Witched the feasters and the dancers,
While he sang his glowing rhapsodes.
Him the muses, good and evil
Often sending mixed together,
Reft of eyesight, while they gave him
Tuneful voice and mystic impulse,
Sacred breath of inspiration:
Met him on their Holy Mountain
In the still ambrosial midnight.
While a youth his flocks he tended,

Gift of song on him bestowing,
Let him hear their choral voices
Gods of bright Olympos hymning.
By the sound and vision haunted
Evermore his soul was lifted ;
All the past in retrospection
Was disclosed unveiled before him,
And he sang the deeds of heroes,
And the purple, cloudless ether,
Where the gods in quiet mansions
Led their lives of pangless joyance.

THE LOST HELEN.

[Agamemnon, 414–439.]

STILL through his hall her vanished form will seem
A queenly shadow gliding as of yore ;
In visions of the night his heart will deem
The Sea divides her from his arms no more.

But vain the solace empty dreams can bring ;
The grasp of love their shapes illusive fly
Adown the maze of sleep on noiseless wing
Mocking with vain delight the hungering eye.

Henceforth from sculptured forms of other days,
That gleam in marble beauty round his hall,
Loathing, impatient he averts his gaze
Enduring naught, that Helen may recall.

THE SLAIN AT TROY.

ANGUISH, which tries the heart, in every home
Of universal Hellas will be known,
When for her braves to distant Ilion gone
Ashes and brazen urns come back alone.

What mourner in that dust of death will find
The shape heroic, which the breast held dear,
Which to the dark funereal urn consigned
War sendeth back from strife of sword and spear?

SCHILLER'S "GODS OF GREECE." *

[Freely translated in part.]

I.

STILL ruled ye with dominion bland,
Man's happy generations swaying,
Fair beings out of fable-land,
When all the young world went a-Maying,
And still thy fanes with wreaths were bright,
O Amathusian Aphrodite!

* Since Schiller's "Gods of Greece" was written, the religion of intolerance, asceticism and blind faith has fallen into disrepute, and the cult of the beautiful or æsthetics has been revived. This worldliness is again the fashion, and men are appreciative of the charms of nature, and find everywhere in

II.

Around the truth the drapery fair
Of poesy was woven then,
Life's fulness streamed through earth and air,
As it will never stream again—
To make her loved and lovely man
Nature enriched with will and feeling,
So that whate'er his eyes might scan
Was trace of deity revealing.

III.

Where only now, as sages say,
Soulless an orb of fire is turning,
Car-borne, a stately God of Day,
In ether blue, men were discerning.
An Oread haunted every hill—
With every tree a Dryad died—
And with its silvery foam each rill
Was deemed from Naiad's urn to glide.

---

a boundless universe an immanent deity, who is no outsider to creation, which is no mere dead mechanism made once on a time out of nothing and run by force delegated for that purpose, but a cosmos in which creative power is always at work as vigorously now as ever. For current science, like the old Greek mythology, finds the universe alive in every molecule and atom. Now, not only is the spirit of other worldliness declining, but the delights of the senses are no longer denounced as sinful, when indulgence is moderated by reason. In one word, the old Hellenic spirit, which Schiller sighed for in the above poem, is now strong again, moulding individuals and communities to a love of the beautiful and true, as well as of the good.

IV.

In every grove plained Philomel—
  Hushed into stone drooped Niobe—
And in each streamlet teardrops fell
  Shed for the lost Persephonè ;
With Syrinx's woe each reed was sighing,
  Wherever brook sped scarce in sight ;
On yonder hill was Venus crying,
  Ah, vainly for her minion bright.

V.

To old Deucalion's race descending
  Enamored deities still came ;
For mortal maid, his flocks while tending ;
  Apollo felt a lover's flame ;
Alike round heroes, gods, and men
  Love did his rosy bondage twine—
Mortals and gods and heroes then
  All knelt at Amathusia's shrine.

VI.

Your festive ritual never knew
  Harsh penance or austere devotion—
The happy were akin to you—
  All hearts throbbed with a glad emotion ;
For then the holy was the fair,
  To Beauty's sceptre all submitting.
Man's raptures gods blushed not to share,
  If Muse and Graces were permitting.

VII.

No spectre o'er the bed of death
Hung ghastly then, but sad affection,
Kissing, received the parting breath,
And Love his torch lowered in dejection.

* * * * * *

VIII.

Where art thou, lovely world? Again
Return, O vanished bloom of yore!
Save in the land of song, your reign,
O happy golden time, is o'er.
Dishallowed meadows, forests mourn—
No glimpse of deity is given—
From disenchanted earth forlorn
Her haunting life of gods was driven.

IX.

Out of the cold North, breathing dun,
A blast that fairy world invaded,
And, while exalted was the one,
The mythic host before him faded.
In yonder starry vault I find,
My lost Selenè,* thee no more,
While hollow echo on the wind
Answers my call from wood and shore.

* Selenè was the Greek name of the moon or of the goddess of the moon.

X.

Unconscious of the joys she yields—
  Of her own splendor unaware—
Blind to the plastic power that wields
  And fashions her forever fair—
Deaf to the voices in her praise—
  Like lifeless pendulum's vibration,
Lo! godless nature now obeys,
  Slavelike, the law of gravitation.

XI.

Day dies, but with each fresh morn shines
  Resurgent from its grave diurnal;
The moon, waxing and waning, winds
  Like spindle swift its round eternal.
Useless, to poet's land they flew,
  Their home, the gods of earth's young days—
The world no more their guidance knew,
  But held itself, self-poised, in space.

XII.

Yes, homeward to the poet's land,
    The bright gods, flying, bore away
All that was beautiful and grand;
  Life's melodies and colors gay.
Saved from the whelming stream of time,
  O'er heights of Pindus still they hover,
Immortally in song sublime,
  They only live whose life is over.

THE LAMENT OF CERES.*

[Translated from the German of Schiller.]

I.

ONCE more is genial spring-time glowing?
Has earth re-youthed herself again?
Green in the sun the hills are growing
And ice-free leaps the brook amain.
While flashes on its mirror blue
The cloudless heaven's reflected sheen;
And west wind's softest whispers woo
The buds to burst in leafage green.

* The legend of Demeter and Kora or of The Mother and The Maiden, as Ceres and Proserpine were called, is the most touching and significant of all the Greek myths. The Mater Dolorosa of Christianity is a plagiarism from it. Ceres was of course a personification of the Earth, and her daughter, Persephonè, of the Earth's annually reappearing vegetable life. This annual resurrection of blade and blossom the old Greeks regarded as a symbol and assurance of the triumph of the human spirit over death. This was the fundamental idea of the Eleusinian mysteries and of the solemn earth-worship celebrated at Eleusis. Schiller has concentrated in the following poem the very essence of the Greek myth of the Mother and Child. It is, perhaps, the finest of his minor poems. It is full of the sadness of the yearning of the human spirit for immortality, full of the sadness of the laceration and mystery of death, and also of the joy and hope of a resurrection or triumph over death.

With lays of love the groves are yearning ;
  Greets me the Oread in the wild,
"Thy flowers, behold, to light returning,
  Returneth not thy vanished child."

II.

How long I 've wandered wide earth o'er,
  A weary quest in vain pursuing,
Sending thy beams to help explore
  Her track, O Sun, whose loss I 'm rueing !
Not one has tidings brought to me
  Where now my hapless darling pines ;
The sun himself, that all can see,
  Vainly to find my lost one shines.
Am I through thee, O Zeus, forlorn ?
  Has Pluto, smitten by her charms,
The maid to hell's dark rivers borne,
  A ravished captive in his arms ?

III.

The herald of my anguish who
  Will be unto that gloomy shore ?
Forever plies the grim canoe,
  But only shadows ferries o'er.
Barred—that no happy eye may know
  Its gloom—the underworld remains.
And long as Stygian stream may flow,
  No living form there entrance gains.
While thousand pathways lead below,
  None back unto the daylight tend,—

No witness of the Maiden's woe
May to the Mother's sight ascend.

IV.

Mothers from Pyrrha's * stock who came
Are at the grave not all forlorn.
They follow through the funeral flame
Their loved,—themselves, too, mortal-born.
Dwellers in Jove's high homestead may
Descend not to the nether strand.
Thither inclined their passage stay
The Parcæ with a pitiless hand.
Oh would I were an outcast there,
From golden halls of heaven exiled!
The stricken mother would forswear
Her deathless birthright for her child.

V.

Where with her gloomy consort she
High-throned in joyless state may sit,
Would I a bodiless shade might be,
With shadows, that before her flit!
Alas, her eyes, blinded with tears,
Seek vainly for the golden light,
And for the distant, starry spheres
They knew of old in earthly night.
Her yearning gaze her mother's face,
Till joy returns, may not behold,

* Pyrrha was the Eve of Greek mythology, or rather the mother of mankind after the flood.

Till, locked once more in close embrace,
Parent and child each other fold,
Till down the cheeks of Orcus stern
The shades of Erebus discern,
Amazed, strange tears of pity rolled.

VI.

This may not be : my grief is vain.
Calm in its even course above
Rolls on the Day-god's golden wain,
Forever stands the will of Jove.
Far from the realm of night, he turns
In bright disdain his glance away.
Once snatched to nether gloom returns
No more my lost one to the day,
Until the streams of Orcus glow
With cheerful tints of roseate dawn,
And over midmost hell her bow
Of beauty Iris shall have drawn.

VII.

Remaineth naught of her to me ?
Is there no sweetest pledge assuring
That, though by space we sundered be,
Our wonted love is still enduring ?
Is there no heart-knot knit, that ties
The mother to the daughter fled ;
No mystic emblem, that allies
The living to the cherished dead ?

Wholly apart we are not riven :
  She has not flown beyond my reach ;
To us the Powers on high have given,
  That we may still commune, a speech.

VIII.

When children of the spring are dying,
  And blade and bloom are turning sere,
And mournfully the bare bough sighing
  Waves leafless in the north wind drear,
The very germ of life I take
  Out of the year's exuberant horn,
An offering to the Styx to make,
  Seed of my own fair, golden corn.
Sadly in earth I bury it low,
  Close to my child's heart lay the grain,
That it may tell her of my woe,
  A mother's love, a mother's pain.

IX.

The roseate hours in frolic dance
  Usher the gracious spring again,
And in the sun's life-kindling glance
  The blade new-born shoots forth amain.
The germs, which to the eye had perished,
  Into the realm of colors bloom,
And by the sunbeams wooed and cherished
  They struggle forth from dark earth's gloom.

While heavenward the stalk aspireth,
Shyly the root gropes toward the night :
Gloom of the underworld requireth
The growing blade and ether's light.

X.

Thus, touching realms of life and death,
The wheaten stalk for me upspringeth :
My herald from the shades beneath,
A message sweet of joy it bringeth.
Out of the spring's young blossoms fair,
Listening, I hear a soft voice say,
That far from daylight's golden air,
Where only mournful shadows stray,
Bosoms the throbs of love still know,
And hearts with fond effusion glow.

XI.

O children of the fresh young year,
With joy unfeigned thus hail I you.
Steeped in the sun, your stalks you rear,
In rainbow tints your flowers appear,
Your cups o'erflow with purest dew.
In springtime's warmth and splendor brief
Each tender breast my joy will know,
And in the autumn's withered leaf
Behold an emblem of my woe.

THE LEGEND OF TITHONOS AND THE DAWN.*

When the ship had left the current of the ocean-river, it entered the waves of the sea with its broad thoroughfares, sailing to the island Aiaiè, where is the abode of Dawn and also of Sunrise.—Odyssey.

HOUR of the still unrisen Sun,
Of dewy-cool, auroral light,
Before thy star, young Phosphor, flit the shadows dun
And dreams of star-sown night.
Not yet with din of wains and tramp of feet
Innumerous the populous city roars,

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* "This fable," says Bacon, in his "Wisdom of the Ancients," "seems to contain an ingenious description of pleasure, which at first, as it were in the morning of the day, is so welcome that men pray to have it everlasting, but forget that satiety and weariness of it will, like old age, overtake them, though they think not of it; so that at length, when their appetite for pleasurable actions is gone, their desires and affections often continue; whence we commonly find that aged persons delight themselves with the discourse and remembrance of the things agreeable to them in their better days. This is very remarkable in men of a loose and men of a military life, the former of whom are always talking over their amours and the latter the exploits of their youth. Like grasshoppers, they show their vigor only by their chirping."

But lies each long, deserted street
Silent as inland vale or lake with wood-fringed shores.

O Dawn, would thou wert even now
As in the long-gone, mythic time,
When wore thy maiden brow
A chaplet sweet of rose and violet and thyme
Silvered with drops of dew or frosty rime!
In mystic isle afar of spiced, uncertain clime,
With comradeship of downy-sandalled Hours,
You dwelt, o'er-roofed by dewy, orient bowers;
While, reddening in your punctual beam,
Anear your palace rolled the ocean-stream,
Which laved with current large
The earth's remotest marge.

There, as she sate upon her golden throne,
One cause of sad disquiet Eōs knew alone.
The childish treble of her age-bowed paramour
Came querulous for evermore
Through shining valve and breezy corridor.

While strength and beauty crowned her sweetheart bright,
In solitary bliss they lay
In bower of Eōs, until orient day
Aroused her to her ministry of light.
How eagerly, when that was o'er,
And rippled in the Sun the ocean-floor,
Back to her chamber flew her footsteps bright!

But loathed Old Age at length
Tithonos reft of all his strength.
"Once," moaned he, "I was jealous of the hour
Which took from mine thy honeyed lips,
And left me lonely in thy bower
Here at the limits of the world,
When stars were waning in eclipse
And vapors upward from the low earth curled.
With burning tears and heavy heart
I saw thy mist-dividing wheels depart,
While, wreathed with roses, round thee ran
The jocund Hours, and Phosphor lit the van
With torch of silver flame,
As up from vale, mead, hearthfire, came
The morning's cheerful steam
To welcome incense-like thy roseate team.

"But now thy deathless beauty mocks me with a sense
Of frigid age and joyless impotence.
My fleeting mortal youth I gave to thee,
No match for thine eternal pedigree.
My flower of strength, limbs, lips and heart were thine,
While love in strictest embrace us did join.
The wooer thou : I passive was to thee
Upon that long-past, unforgotten day
When on swift wheels you ravished me away,
And far aloof in chambers of the Morn
Me thrilled with bliss for which I was not born.
The Hours, which waste me, night by night renew

Thy bloom with a rejuvenescent dew ;
While I, thy paramour of mortal race,
Grow gray and shrivelled in your bright embrace.
Jove's spell reverse, that I may find the rest
Earth's children crave upon their mother's breast."

She in her inmost chamber him immured,
With bolts and bars the shining valves secured.
The tremulous graybeard had for food
Ambrosia in his odorous solitude.
Pervaded hall and breezy corridor
His piping accents evermore ;
While up to Eōs on her throne of gold,
From vales, seas, mountains, strains Memnonian rolled.

At length, transformed and shrunken, gradual grew
Her lover old to a grasshopper drinking dew,
Whose bloodless limbs in summer suns rejoice ;
Who from the tree-tops pours a shrill, incessant voice ;
Whose song immortal as himself was dear
To husbandmen and poets old ;
The advent of the cheerful spring foretold ;
Whose tuneful impulse, accents clear,
The loving Muses gave ;
Who passionless, defiant of the grave,
At last to semblance of the gods came near.

HYLAS.

THE noontide glowed with fervent heat,
And deeper tanned the grain ;
With iteration fierce repeat
The cicads shrill their strain.

Laving his feet the river's wave
A mirror 'neath him flowed,
Where glassed in dew the welkin blue
With softened splendor showed.

As in a dream witched by the gleam
Of nether heaven he stood
Enamoured of the boy uprose
The daughters of the flood.

"Soft blooms the down upon your cheek,
Where rose and ivory blend,—
From scorching air to grottos fair,
O stripling sweet, descend.

"In cooling wave delights to lave
The sun at eventide,
With heightened sheen ascends serene
The moon from ocean wide."

Streamed long and fair the naiads' hair,
Appealed their eyes of blue ;
From summer's glow to grots below
The youth their glamor drew.

His loss deplore for evermore
The reapers in their lays;
While falls the grain, their plaintive strain
Makes sad the harvest days.*

VERNAL HYMN TO APOLLO.

FOLLOWERS of the Sage of Samos,†
In the foreworld's purple spring,
To the god of song and gladness
Pæans loud were wont to sing.
Seven-chorded lyre their master
Fashioned deftly vibrant rung,
And, as flowed their bright libations,
This perchance the strain they sung:

* Apropos of the above lines, among the husbandmen of ancient Greece and Western Asia there were sung at harvest time and the period of greatest summer heat, when the Dog-star rages, certain mournful ditties, which lamented the fate of certain deified boys or youths of rare beauty, who were fabled to have perished by drowning or to have been devoured by rabid dogs. Their untimely fate was lamented by reapers in melancholy songs. These youths were variously called Hylas, Linus, Bormus, and Adonis. But the real object of lamentation, as Müller says in his "Literature of Ancient Greece," was the tender beauty of spring blasted by the summer heat. This evanescent bloom was personified and bewailed in mournful harvest songs. The ancient husbandmen, in making their annual laments for beauty too swiftly flown and blasted, were simply moved by "that sadness which cleaves to all finite existence."

† Pythagoras.

'T is the season, O Apollo,
When from mystic sojourn far
Com'st thou Delphi's steep regaining
In thy swan-drawn, radiant car.
Earth in blossoms breaks to greet thee,
Soars o'erhead the cloudless blue,
Carol birds in every thicket:
We, thy votaries, carol too.

Myrrhine odors from thy temple
Curl aloft in fragrant mist;
Flash the peaks of high Parnassus
By the rays of morning kissed;
Light of prophecy still streameth
From thy holy mountain shrine;
Gifts of many-languaged suppliants
There in votive splendor shine.

Priceless, glorious mementos
Of the past are gleaming there,
While o'erhead the crag-born eagles
Poise themselves in azure air.
Sculptured beauty, that decays not,
Deathless haunts thy templed glen;
Charms, that once could fire the nations,
Still witch there the eyes of men.*

* There were several votive golden statues at Delphi of women famed for their loveliness; among others one of the fair but frail Phryne, the most famous beauty of ancient Hellas. It was the work of Praxiteles, of solid gold, and stood on a pillar of Pentelican marble. The cynic philosopher, Crates, called it a votive offering of the profligacy of Greece. Beauty was a sacred attribute in the estimation of the Greeks, even the beauty of a courtesan.

Round thy Sibyl, as her accents
Fate's enigmas dark unfold,
Tributes hoarded through the ages,
Kings' ex-votos blaze in gold.
To thy lofty threshold wafted
Come perfumes from sea and vale.
Through its flowery gorge, thy river *
Shaded runs by olives pale.

On thy sacred steep thou sittest,
God of justice and of light :
Thither countless votaries climbing
Bow in homage to thy might.
Welcome was thy glad arrival,
Sound of song and lyre was heard,
Dark and bloody rites were banished,
Souls to harmony were stirred.

Pillared fanes and cities rising
Made the earth more lovely seem,
Poet, sculptor, words and marble
Wrought to likeness of his dream.
Genius by thine impulse quickened
Poured itself in Pythian lay ;
At thy bidding, truce and quiet
Reigned along each travelled way.

God of shepherds, once you tended
Mortal's flock on pastoral lea,

* The river Pleistus, which flowed from the steep of Delphi through the lovely plain of Cirrha into the sea. Up the gorge of this river swarmed pilgrims to the shrine of Apollo.

At your humble service listening
Low of kine and hum of bee.
Garland of the sacred laurel
Thou round victor's brow dost twine.
Healer, lyrist, and soothsayer,
All thy functions are benign.

Quelled by magic of thy harping
Darkest passions sink to rest;
Pangs of wild remorse assuaging
Cleansest thou the guilty breast.
All the festal, glad emotions
At thy bidding wake and glow;
Thus thou giv'st to man, ill-fated,
Respite sweet from care and woe.

Archer art thou; and thine arrows,
Raining plagues and vengeance, fly
When injustice crowned and haughty
Dares affront thy deity.
But thy gentle shafts thou keepest
For thy favorites' release:
Noiseless from thy bowstring speed they
Dipped in dews of sleep and peace.*

Thus thy votaries might have hymned thee,
Phoibos, in the long-ago,
When the rays of morning deemed were
Arrows from thy golden bow.

---

* An euthanasia or sudden, painless death, was attributed by the ancient Greeks to the gentle arrows (*agana belea*) of Apollo and Dian.

Caves and fountains, which you haunted,
Pensive pilgrims, musing, scan :
Now but souvenirs in them find they
Of the fancies strange of man.

Gorgeous dreams and beauteous shadows,
Which to form and feature grew,
And were shrined as gods in temples,
Ere man his own nature knew.
These a deep hallucination
Real made through centuries long,—
Personal forces, which the reason
Banished has to realm of song.

Of that airy brood, Apollo
Brightest was that fancy feigned.
Lord of light and song and music
Over Hellas long he reigned.
Like Jehovah on Mount Zion,
He was throned on Phocian Hill.
Shrunk he long since to a shadow,
But Jehovah reigneth still.

COLAEUS OF SAMOS.

B.C. 640.

THE Samian Colaeus
Long tempest-driven saw
At length earth's western margin
With gaze of silent awe.

He first of Grecian sailors
Far in the foretime lone
Found egress for his galley
Into a world unknown,

Old Homer's ocean-river,
Deep-running, without bound,
That with its green brine girdled
The foodful earth around.
That through the rift of earthquake
Poseidon's trident made,
'Twixt Libya, Asia, Europe
A foamy pathway laid,

Filling the great sea-valley
Far eastward e'en to Nile,
Where infant navigation
Crept slow from isle to isle.
From its primeval waters,
Its azure-flowing tide,
The rains and dews are gendered,
All founts and rivers glide.

Colaeus saw the Pillars
Strong Herakles upreared,
And boldly 'neath their shadow
His errant prow he steered.
Myth-nurtured, gazed he wistful
Out o'er the world-sea's brine,
In golden clouds of sunset
Saw many a marvel shine,

Saw, haply, gleaming pathway,
That o'er the billows led
To rich Hesperian gardens
And islands of the dead.
Thereafter, Commerce halted
At pillared straits no more,
But traffic sought undaunted
By outer ocean's roar.*

DEMETER, OR THE ELEUSINIAN MOTHER.

(CHORUS OF THE INITIATED.)

I.

FOREGLEAMS of immortal
Life on us are shining,
Us the Mystic Mother
With a hope assureth
Of a better being,
When our ashes darkling
Lie inurned, forgotten.

---

* The voyage of Colaeus of Samos through the Straits of Gibraltar into the Atlantic Ocean was a great event in the history of primitive commerce. Colaeus had sailed for Egypt, but was driven by an easterly storm to the western extremity of the Mediterranean Sea, "not without divine direction," says the historian Herodotus, in recording the event, which occurred B.C. 640. It was the first historic voyage of a Greek mariner into the Atlantic Ocean, which was then literally "an unknown world" of water.—HUMBOLDT.

II.

Therefore beaming cheerly
Sun and moon shine on us ;
Only us they gladden,
Only us no shadows
Cast by boding terror,
Dread of the hereafter,
Lifelong darken, sadden.

III.

As the years steal from us
Strength and manly beauty,
Deaden the emotions,
Dark locks thin and whiten,
Bow the upright stature,
We repine not, rather
See but barriers falling,
Walls of flesh collapsing,
O'er which glides the spirit,
Freed, enlarged, and joyous,
To its goal eternal

IV.

In the solemn midnight
Ope your mystic portals,
On their hinges clanging,
At whose sound profane feet
Leave the holy precinct
Swift with trepidation.
Far, within, the Mother,

In her azure peplum,
Star-besprent and flowing,
Crowned with golden corn-ears,
Stands in awful beauty.
O'er her mighty shoulders
Flow her wheaten tresses,
From her robes exhaling
An ambrosial odor.—

v.

Sate the sad Earth-Mother,
Drooping with bereavement,
On the Stone of Sorrow,
Smileless, silent, foodless,
O'er her waved an olive.
By the wayside sate she,
Near the public fountain,
Whither came for water
Maidens of Eleusis.
Nurse of royal children,
Stewardess and keeper
Of some stately mansion
Born in years long vanished
Seemed she in her aspect.
Coming there for water
With their brazen pitchers
Celeus' daughters saw her,
Four in number were they,
In the fragrant flower-time
Of their youth and beauty,—
Knew they not the goddess,

Hard of recognition
Are the dread Celestials.
"Whence art thou, O Mother?
Generations long past
Claim thee as coeval,
Wherefore from the city
Far aloof art keeping?
Women such as thou art,
In yon stately mansion,
Old as thou, are dwelling;
Younger ones would love thee,
Give thee kindly greeting."

VI.

To their father's palace
Thereupon they led her;
She behind, dejected,
Followed, veiled completely
From her head all downward;
Peplum of the goddess
Dark blue lightly rustled
Round her agile footsteps.
In her fragrant bosom
Nurtured she Demophoön,
Son of Metaneira.
With her breath celestial
Nightly round the nursling
Flames the goddess kindled
Dross of mortal nature
From him swiftly purging.
Soon annealed and deathless,

Like his nurse, the infant
Would have sprung to manhood,
But the jealous mother,
Full of wild misgivings,
Anxious for her darling,
In the stilly midnight
Saw his fiery nurture,
Shrieked with fright and anguish,
Till the angry goddess
From her breast immortal
Thrust the earth-child rudely,
From her mighty stature
Shedding human weakness,
Every mortal semblance,
Stood she there apparent.
Beauty breathed around her
And divinest odors
Shook she from her garments ;
Splendor of her presence
Shone through all the palace,
As the great Earth-Mother
From its door departed.
All night long the household
Tremulous with terror,
Knelt in adoration,
Anxious to appease her.

VII.

Hail, O Mother, Maiden !
Benefactors are ye,
Deities primeval,

Sap of vernal grass blade,
Queens of tilth and verdure
Giving earth its fatness,
Joy and strength to mortals.
Stand ye in the West wind
With dishevelled tresses
Tanned by tawny summer,
Reigning over harvests,
Threshing-floors and farmsteads.

VIII.

Jasion, beauteous minion,
In thy furrows wooed thee,
O deep-bosomed Mother,
Won thy love and embrace
In the soft, sweet springtime,
Till a son you bore him,
Plutus, god of riches.
Blasted Zeus, the stripling,
Jealous that a mortal
Such divine fruition
Ever should have tasted.

IX.

From thy steeps, Athenai,
Pillared, olive-shaded,
Yearly march the people
Fresh from surf baptismal
Of Ægean surges
Purified and stainless
In august procession
Westward to Eleusis.

X.

Blest is he of mortals
Who ere graveward going,
Thee beholds, O Mother!
For the end he knoweth,
Scope of man's existence,
And its source he knoweth.
Past the grave's dark portals,
Past the nether rivers
On Elysian meadows
Joyous he emerges
Crowned with festive myrtle.
Breathes he purer ether,
An inebriation
Not of mortal wine cup,
But of bliss eternal
Ever thrills his spirit.*

* The "Eleusinian Mysteries."—In the history of the evolution of the religious sentiment and of comparative theology the "Eleusinian Mysteries" occupy a noteworthy chapter. The aim of these mysteries was, like that of Christianity, to deprive death and the grave of their sting; in one word, to furnish their devotees with a happy solution of

"The sorrow and the mystery
Of all this unintelligible world."

Initiation into these mysteries was a recognized preparation for death, and the supposed means of triumphing over the last enemy of mortals. Bishop Warburton, in his "Divine Legation of Moses," labors to show that the Sixth Book of Virgil's Æneid is in fact an exposition of the rites and scenes connected with initiation into the mysteries. To be sure, Virgil's Sixth Book is devoted to a poetic account of the state of the

CHORUS IN LESBOS.

I almost saw the Judge of Shadows drear
And sable Proserpine in twilight reigning;
Eolian Sappho's lyre could almost hear
Of damsels of her native isle complaining,
And thee, Alcæus, sing with fuller strain
Hardships of sea and war and exile's longing,
Both minstrels hushed and eager audience gain
Of disembodied spirits round them thronging.

HORACE, *Carminum*, Lib. ii., 13.

Sappho and her Pupils.

US morning's dewy red is arching o'er;
Ionian columns gird us, where we stand;
Song's daystars we to earth's remotest shore
Our strains have reached from this fair island's strand;

---

dead in Tartarus and Elysium, according to the popular belief of the old pagan world. But Virgil, in the book aforesaid, merely followed in the wake of his master, Homer, who, in the "Odyssey," gives a similar account of the realm of the dead, or the land of the hereafter, according to pagan notions. The high character of Virgil, who was one of the whitest souls of the fore-world, to use the language of his friend and fellow-poet, Horace, in regard to him, forbids us to entertain for a moment the idea that he could have deliberately revealed the secrets of initiation, when he was bound by oath not to do so, and when to have done so would have made him accursed and infamous, an object of horror and execration, in the estimation of the best men of the world of his day.

To earth's remotest shore and latest time
The modulations of our lyres will ring;
The future's bards, us minstrels of the prime
In grateful melodies will ever sing.

Their colder spirits kindle at our fire;
Our honied numbers borrow for their lays;
Our genius thus will every age inspire.
While love shall melt and bloom the poet's bays

Our lips with honey of the Muses flow;
Our winged words like Hyperion's arrows fly
From far Cyrene's palms to Scythia's snow,
With viewless speed they hurtle through the sky.

Them, like swift doves, the enamored winds will bear,
Whether in storm or zephyrs soft they blow;
From groves of myrtle, blue Ægean air,
Our messengers through time and space they go.

Sappho.

Where'er the beams of twilight Hesper shine
O'er sunset-reddened mount or roseate vale,
Making the loved around her lover twine
Her vinelike arms, my memory ne'er shall fail.

As long as cloistered flowers in gardens bloom
Unbruised by plough, by dew and sunbeams fed;
From their seclusion wafting sweet perfume,
My hymeneals shall be sung and read.

All.

The forum's throng the speaker's tongue can rule—
With subtler sway the poet's lips are fraught ;
We sisters of fair Mitylene's school
From many a strife have victory's garlands brought ;

From bearded bards have borne the palm away,
While festal Hellas cheered us as we sung ;
To match the music of Corinna's lay
The Theban master's chords in vain were strung.

O bright Harmonia, with thy golden hair,
Are not thy rose-crowned daughters women too ?
The mightiest poets with prelusive prayer
Their inspiration never fail to woo.

Man's love defiles ; a purer passion binds
Our muse-knit choir with strong though tender bond ;
Joy he in his heroic friendships finds ;
Why should not maid to maiden's love respond ?

Around our dwelling, haunt of muses, bloom
Green citron woods with golden fruitage hung ;
And when the starry twilight spreads its gloom
The nightingale is busy with her tongue.

Ripples the azure sea, while far away
Sidonian galleys in the sunshine gleam—
No fairer clime nor isle the god of day
In his bright circuit lightens with his beam.

The rosy hours on noiseless pinions glide ;
We strike the harp or make the shuttle fly,
Or o'er some goddess' vestment saffron-dyed,
By fancy guided, needles deftly ply.

Alcæus (*Alkaios*).

O peerless singer of my native isle !
My harp, though famed, I never matched with thine ;
I would have dearly won thy maiden smile ;
Alas, on me thine eyes would never shine !

In storm and exile I have wandered long,
And battle's splendor seen on many a shore,
But still to thee I lift my latest song,
Thy face I ever in my memory bore.

My heart of hearts thine image has enshrined ;
It brings me here low at thy feet to fall ;
Let me this wreath about thy loved brow bind,
O pure and violet-crowned, I am thy thrall !

The might of prophecy on me descends ;
The rifted future opens vistas far ;
Forever more with thine my glory blends,
As in fame's heaven we shine, each one a star.

If not in mine own speech my strains will live,
A kindred soul will shrine them in his tongue ;
As long as wine to winter's gloom shall give
A festal joy, my measure shall be sung ;

As long as men o'er fallen tyrants raise,
With shouts of joy, the goblet's purple gleam,
Me freedom's lyrist will the nations praise
And own song's orb, whose rays from Lesbos stream.

I, too, have sung of love and love's sweet star
Which brings the wayward wanderer to his home ;
For Lesbos I have yearned, when exiled far,
And gladly seen it rise o'er ocean's foam.

Alas ! the day will come in future years,
When this dear isle a ruined waste will be ;
If then his bark the pilgrim hither steers
The lode which draws will be a thought of thee.

Antimenidas (*a Soldier and Brother of Alcæus*).

I am a soldier from Euphrates' vale
And proudly wear my ivory-handled sword—
The gift of orient king for victory won.
I bow my crest, O Sappho, unto thee !
And to the lovely starlike group of maids
Who round thee as their moon in beauty shine.
Ionia's loveliness is flashing forth
The eyes of Anaktoria there ; she brings
From soft Miletos witcheries of motion,
A look of bright intelligence, that oft
Have for Ionia's peerless daughters won
O'er rich Assyria's luxurious lords
Dominion absolute of heart and throne.
I look again, lo ! she of Kolophon

Is fair ; all, all are fair, most beauteous, sweet,
To roving soldier, weary, battle-scarred,
Who longs for embrace of such soft, white arms
To heal his hurts and lull him into dreams—
I am no songster like my brother here,
But I the kithara can sweep rudely ;
Then list, O ladies, hearken to my song—
'T is of the mighty land where I 've sojourned.

The Hanging Gardens.

The pensile gardens which o'erhang
The Euphratean vale,
Where swift an upland flora sprang
O'er mimic hill and dale,
Were reared by love—an empress pined
In that low valley-land ;
She languished for the mountain wind
Her childhood's brow that fanned.

Her own blue highlands far away
Her glances sought in vain ;
Beneath her hot and dusty lay
The river-furrowed plain ;
While from Baal's terraces outspread
In long perspective grand
Were strung upon the river's thread
The cities of the land.

Nostalgia's anguish to beguile,
On vast substructions reared,

The hanging gardens, pile on pile,
O'er Babel's roofs appeared.
In currents of the upper air
Familiar branches stir
To cheer the heart of exile fair
Of beech and pine and fir.

O'er Asshur's towers and starry fanes
The mimic Media hung,
And mocked below the sultry plains,
Where palm and citron sprung.
Acclaimed a god, the builder fell
Below the plane of man ;
With grazing herds henceforth to dwell,
He grovelling beastlike ran.

MIMNERMOS.*

I.

BLOOM of beauty quickly fadeth—
Youth like morn-mist swift is flown,
And its festal hours departed
We with vain regrets bemoan.

* Mimnermos was one of the old Ionian lyric poets. He was a contemporary of Solon (B.C. 632), the Athenian lawgiver, and in consequence of the enslavement of his country by outside barbaric kings, his poetry was of a melancholy character. The Ionians, unmanned by their soft, delicious climate, and by contact with the voluptuous and depraved contiguous populations, had become degenerate and sunken in sensuality. As the only consolation for the fallen political condition of himself and his countrymen, Mimnermos recommended in his verses the enjoyment of the passing hour, and

While the spring of fresh emotion
In thy breast exultant flows,
And thy limbs are lithe and beauteous,
And thy heart impassioned glows,

II.

Let the garland bind thy temples
And the lute and viol sound,
And the gladness of the grape-juice
At the banquet circle round.

---

particularly of love, which the gods had given to man as a compensation for all human ills, The beauty of youth and love appears with the greater charm when accompanied with the impression of its caducity, and the images of joy stand out in more vivid light as contrasted with the shadows of deep-seated melancholy. "With this soft Ionian poet," says Müller in his "Literature of Ancient Greece," "who even compassionates the God of the Sun for the toils which he must endure in order to illuminate the earth, Solon, the Athenian, who was also a poet, presents a marked contrast." There did at last come to the Ionian or Asiatic Greeks emancipation from the sway of oriental satraps and despots. The battle of Mykale, fought on the same day on which the battle of Platæa was fought, gave deliverance to the Greeks of Asia. Aspasia, the mistress of Perikles, was an Ionian Greek from Miletus. Curiously enough, the first great Greek poets and philosophers were Ionian Greeks, such as Homer and Pythagoras and Demokritos and Anaxagoras. Thus Greek genius manifested itself first, not in Greece proper, but in a Greek colony, viz., Ionia. By the way, the Hebrew lyrist, voluptuary, and pessimist, King Solomon, who lived farther east than the Ionians, was even more of a sensualist and *carpe-diem* bard than Mimnermos and the other Ionian minstrels.

What is life ! devoid of pleasure
Without golden Aphrodite—
Then our days have lost joy's savor,
When she giveth not delight.

III.

Let me, then, the pyre encumber,
Stretched in mortal paleness cold—
Drenched with farewell, sad libations
Let the flames my limbs enfold.
Better to be dust and ashes,
'Neath a mound of long grass laid,
Better pleasant sunlight leaving
Roam the underworld a shade,
Than in life to linger loveless,
Sere, emotionless, decayed.

IV.

Founts in courts of marble playing
With cool murmurs plash and sing—
Goblets brimmed with purple vintage
Sleep to care and sorrow bring.
Where are they of vanished ages,
Heroes famous far and wide ?
Insubstantial, joyless shadows
Now through Hades dim they glide.

V.

Say, what profit of their labors
And their sufferance do they know ?

Happier is a poor drudge living
Than a king of shades below.
Once the Ionians, too, were valiant,
So at least the proverbs say ;
Now to soft delights surrendered
Run inert our lives away.

VI.

Thee we pity golden Day-god
Climbing heaven evermore,
Sinking in the western ocean,
When thy fervid task is o'er ;
Thee no toilless future waiteth
Bringing light to gods and men—
Soon as Dawn's bird singeth, thou must
Up the zenith drive again.

VII.

While yon bright sun still is o'er us,
And a breathing world around,
Let us, O my fair-tressed Nanno,
Loyal still to Love be found.
Nightly let Selené kiss us
With her soft enamored rays,
While love's vigils sweetly keeping,
List we Philomela's lays.

VIII.

Like to leaves, so Homer singeth,
Generations come and go ;
Love is in this brief existence
All the pure bliss we can know.

Round thee, O Ionian Smyrna,
Clanks the Lydian conqueror's chain ;
Bravely fought thy vanquished burghers,
But their valor was in vain.

IX.

Love and beauty still are left us,
And the gift of song divine ;
Wherefore should we not our sorrows
Mitigate with love and wine ?
'T is the clime of beauty, genius,
Soft Ionia, with its isles—
From her violet sea love's Goddess
Rose all dimpled o'er with smiles.

X.

Asian despots not forever
O'er us shall maintain their sway—
Dawneth in some happy future
For Ionia freedom's day ;
Then the Panionium's pillars
Proudly o'er the waves shall soar ·
And the Ægean's restless surges
Lave a free strand evermore.

IDOLS.

FIRST to cone or pillar rude,
Or sky-projectile from the moon,
Amorphous, shapeless, and unhewn,
Knelt artless man in reverent mood.

On legless feet as base next stood
Shape wrought of stone or cedar wood,
Half-organic : o'er it wove
A verdurous roof the sacred grove.
Breathed dædal Art its magic spell
And in mystic, perfumed cell,
Carven fair of marble white
On a throne sate Aphrodite ;
Locks of Zeus ambrosial rolled
Wrought in ivory and gold ;
Hunted Artemis in stone ;
Pallas loomed o'er sea and land
Warder of the Attic strand ;
And with silver bow in hand
Python-slayer Phœbus shone.
Carving semblances of life,
Chisel waged with nature strife,
Made the Parian block express
Ideal might and loveliness,
Beauty of a mould more fair
Than ever breathed the earth's gross air.

PYGMALION.

A LEGEND OF CYPRUS.

PYGMALION, in his studio lone imaging
In marble cold the idol of his heart,
The lady of his fervid dreams, whom only
With his cunning chisel's keen incisiveness
He in the quarry's lustrous stone could find,
Was archetype of genius evermore.

Perchance the Amathusian dreamer sought
A loveliness which Nature's self had marked
With outline clear of veiny streaks, so that
The block he worked on did already teem
With hidden beauty, needing but the light
And extrication from its limestone womb
To ravish with its lineaments the world.

In solitude withdrawn, he wrought intensely,
And, as he wrought, he grew enamored ; for
He saw the vision of his heart to light
Slowly emerging, till at last it stood
Consummate in its carven loveliness.

Its sculptor, or deliverer, was thralled
With passion deep for his own handiwork,
Born not of wanton womankind, but from
The throes of genius and ideal love.
A pang of sweetest longing thrilled his heart,
As the admitted sunset softly streamed
O'er its fair proportions with roseate bloom,
Encrimsoning the perfect lips and brow
And budding roundness of the maiden breast,
Kindling to aureole the snooded hair
And swathing with a golden mist the form
Divine. Lone-gazing sate the sculptor lone,
Victorious o'er his hard material,
Which he had suppled to his vision fair.
Large draughts of rapture drank he with his eyes
From that bright shape, the daughter of his
dreams,

Which, from the chambers of his imagery,
Like blue-eyed Pallas, came unmothered forth,
Till daylight waned and sighed the evening breeze
Rustling the vine leaves trellising his lodge.

Then looked the Moon and Hesper in with love-
light sweet,
Bathing, transfiguring the statue fair,
Till, glowing with desire, he in his arms
Encompassed it, imprinting many a kiss,
And fondly deemed his kisses were returned,
And thought the marble breast, with fleshlike soft-
ness,
To his warm impassioned pressure yielded.
In the ears insentient murmured he his love,
His blandishments, as if the statue heard
And felt a mutual bliss. Then gifts he brought
To win its heart, such gifts as maidens love.
Around the fulgent neck as Cypria's fair
Sparkled a carcanet with hanging pearls,
Which rode below the bosom's billowy swell.
With glittering drops he hung the shapely ears,
With convolutions delicate as shells
Of paly pink, that strew the ocean's strand.
In vestments rare he clad the glossy image,
E'en on his purple couch made it repose.

At length his madness to himself became
Apparent ; saw he that he loved a thing
Of stone, a beauty feelingless and cold.
But laved his natal island shores the waves
Wherefrom the foam-born queen of beauty rose.

So to her fragrant shrine not far away
He, desperate, went, and to the Cyprian goddess,
There where she rose refulgent o'er a cloud
Of frankincense from all her hundred altars
Fuming in graceful spirals to the air,
He knelt and prayed with an impassioned prayer
Broken with sobs and tears ; 't was from his heart,
And touched the heart of love's own empress
bright.

So, when he homeward fared, he found to flesh
His marble maid had been transmuted, warmed
To sentient, winsome, and bewitching life.

With sweet smile hailed she his return, blushing,
With downcast, erubescent loveliness,
So that he greeted her with kiss, that clung
Insatiable unto her unborn lips.

SARDANAPALUS.

"Plumâ Sardanapali."
JUVENAL.

"I ATE and drank and loved, while brightly shone
For my imperial eyes Assyria's sun ;
For dalliance, wine, and song I cared alone,
Knowing that mortal life is quickly done."
This legend Sardanapalus' statue bore,
In old Anchiale, that carven stood.

The youthful Alexander conned it o'er
Moving on Persia, in heroic mood.
The soft Assyrian scorned all conquest save
Of beauties coy ; on downy plumes he wooed
Slumber and soft delights ; to dalliance gave
His hours inert ; in wine not blood imbrued
His delicate hands ; at length forgot to rule,
And 'mong his lemans carded purple wool.

THE CARRIER DOVE.

A SWIFT-WINGED dove, with iridescent plumes,
Through lonely heights of air was noiseless flying ;
And as he flew his pinions shed perfumes,
While far below the bright Levant was lying.

O'er isles where palm and vine were greenly growing,
And marble cities flashed the sinking sun—
With roseate hues earth, air, and sea were glowing,
And still his goal the lone dove had not won.

What marvels from that height his eyes could scan,
As arrow-like through ether he was gliding !
The Giant of the Sun, with mighty span,
Perchance he saw the port of Rhodes bestriding.

But naught could lure him from his mission sweet.
At length amid the spent day's golden fire,
Descending from the air with pinions fleet,
He furled them, perching on Anacreon's lyre.

LEDA AND THE SWAN.

HERE comes my feathered lover all aglow,
The glassy stream with hidden oarage cleaving.
So floats, a crescent fair, the young moon low
O'er mountain heights, which day's red rays are leaving;

So sunny fleeces through high ether sail—
The zephyr-wafted argosies of air.
My lovely, loving, breathing galley, hail,
And dost to woo a human sweetheart dare?

Then round me clasp thy strong and lustrous wing,
For me with sweet desire its plumules thrill.
Here, in still eventide of purple spring,
A wooer silver-plumed, wouldst have thy will?

With whispers low the river reeds are sighing—
Soft on mine own thy whitest bosom presses—
I know some god disguised in thee is plying
Me with the ardor of his warm caresses.

THE IONIAN WISE MEN.

OUR lot was cast in pleasant places on the isles
Of old Ionia with its cloudless heaven,
Which Helios wreathed with sunniest smiles,
To gladden us, the famous deep-lored seven.

Our guide was reason-regulated sense,
To which eternal Truth unmasks her charms;
Through Nature's veil we saw Omnipotence
Upholding all things with unwearied arms.

We knew ourselves, and, diving, found within
A depth as fathomless as that above,—
We knew that right and justice only win;
Their law with being's fibre is inwove.

The beauteous towns are dust, where we abode;
They crumbled 'neath the foot-falls of the years;
Yet still the cloudless heavens which o'er them glowed
Are shining down with their unmouldering spheres.

And like those ancient heavens our words survive,
Because they syllable the truth of things;
For goods which lure the herd we did not strive,—
'T was wisdom, reason, gave our thoughts their wings.

I, Thales, scanned the countless stars on high,
Which guide with silent beams the sailor's bark;
I was the primal student of the sky,
And full of awe I communed with the dark.

Me in Miletos once they jeering hailed:
"What reap'st thou, dreamer, in the ether blue?"
I answered them when all their olives failed,
And from my hoard they fruits of star-lore drew.

The Builder of the world so beauteous made
  His fabric that my feet would stumble oft,
As walked I musing 'neath the night's vast shade,
  And heedless of the earth gazed up aloft.

His subtlest, swiftest messenger is Thought,
  Which tireless through the universe can run ;
While Time to light has many a mystery brought,
  Will yet unriddle all his hands have done.

I, Solon, hated tyranny and strove
  To plane of justice to uplift the throng ;
In many a verse my sapience I wove,
  Whose broken accents yet my fame prolong.

The spirit-world was unto us unbarred,—
  The shows of things our senses ne'er misled,
No mote of avarice our vision marred,
  We bathed our bosoms in the morning's red.*

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* See the soliloquy of Faust in the opening scene of that poem, where he exclaims :

"No bar the spirit-world hath ever borne,—
  It is thy thought is shut, thy heart is dead.
Up ! scholar, bathe, unwearied and unworn,
  Thine earthly breast in morning's beams of red."

IPHIGENIA.

I.

OLD superstition's lurid shadows cloud,
Famed Grecian maid, thy stately loveliness.
Priestess of altars, where in his distress
The wave-worn mariner, shipwrecked, poured his blood.
Thy seeming sacrifice the winds unchained
At Aulis, while soul-stricken bowed thy sire ;
But not thy pure and virgin arteries stained
With life-tide sweet the dark priest's altar dire.
For lo ! beneath his curst knife bleeding lay
A beauteous mountain hart in place of thee ;
For Dian not in mercy snatched thy form away
Through blue air to a hideous ministry.
Dira Religio ! in his deathless verse
Thee well might the indignant Roman curse.

II.

O priests of current creeds, your altars too,
Like those of Aulis and of Tauris, claimed
Their human victims. Sacrificial dagger drew
Not blood ; but faggot-fires of torment flamed
In a not distant past. Your god was then
A homicide like Tauric Artemis,
Who drained the shrunk veins of poor shipwrecked men.

Three centuries back did Grim Toledo hiss
With torture-fires; Geneva, Smithfield glowed;
Still later Rome. No longer brooks that scorching mode
Of pious argument the world *we* know.
Calchas* and Dominic and Calvin now
Could corrugate with pain no victim's brow.
Their knives and fires are things of long-ago.

CRŒSUS AND SOLON.

I.

CRŒSUS, the millionaire, his pile who made
In some bonanza of the Tmolus chain,
Down which gold-sanded torrents rolled amain,
And Mœnads danced, beneath the pine-tree's shade,

* Iphigenia, the daughter of King Agamemnon, was sacrificed at Aulis, before the Grecian fleet bound for Troy could sail. But the priest found not the maiden, but a mountain stag, stretched bleeding before the altar by the blow of his knife. Diana snatched the human victim away. She was carried through the air to a temple of her rescuer on the coast of the Black Sea, among the Scythians or Tartars. Shipwrecked Greek sailors were here sacrificed to Diana by the barbarians, and Iphigenia was made a priestess; but she only clipped the locks of the victims, and was not present at the sacrifice. She finally escaped from Scythia to Athens, where she was worshipped as a goddess after her death. A man was sacrificed at her shrine during the rites. So that Iphigenia was associated with human sacrifices as victim, priestess, and goddess.

With his barbaric opulence essayed
To dazzle Attic Solon's eyes in vain—
The sage was on the grand tour of the day
And took the Lydian capital in his way.
The monarch showed him ingots, bricks and bars
Of solid gold heaped in his treasure room,
Which glittered like the night with all its stars.
Him, Solon, happiest of men to call
Declined, because some final, direful doom
Might him despite his heaps of wealth befall.

II.

Not to a tinselled and barbaric king,
Incult and brainless, with his vulgar greed
Would proud Athenai's lawgiver concede
The primacy of earthly bliss or bring
A courtier's incense to his nostrils vain,
Though largess large his flattery might gain.
The humblest burgher of his own light soil,
Who earned his sacred commonwealth's esteem
By civic virtues, happier he did deem
Than King set off by Asia's glistening foil—
Crœsus, in anger, closed the interview,
Scarce to his blunt guest waving an adieu,
Who, homeward to the land of bees and oil,
With pride unlowered his journey did pursue.

ÆSOP.

IN that far auroral time,
Genius' matin hour and prime,
When the slopes of Lesbos rung
To the lays which Sappho sung;
When from Acro-Corinth's brow
Ruled Periander all below,
Seeing wafted by each breeze
Mariners from many seas
Seeking Corinth's havens twain,
Seeking Amathusia's fane;
When on eastern pilgrimage
Travelled Solon, gnomic sage,
And the Lydian's regal sheen
Dazzled not his eye serene;
When her freedom Athens lost
Trampled by Peisistratos,
And a tyrant's single will
Made the Agora be still;
Epos of the beast and bird,
Then from Æsop's lips was heard,
Hole of Fox and Lion's den,
Ethic wisdom taught to men.
Lifted he to human plane
Dog and wolf and ass and crane,
Chanticleer and peacock vain.

All the lower tribes for us
Made he witty, garrulous.
Under feathered, furred disguise
Lurked the Phrygian freedman wise,
With impunity his wit
Purple tyrants, kings could hit—
Shafts he launched 'neath Grecian sky
In those days so long gone by,
Yet as current proverbs fly.
Good things out of reach this hour
Still are Reynard's clusters sour.
Beasts, 't is said, in the Age of Gold
Sylvan parliaments did hold.
Birds articulate could then
Give advice to husbandmen ;
Rocks and leaves of pine-trees talked
Unto such as 'neath them walked.

Odors of the wood and field
Æsop's mythiambics yield,
Freshness of the open air
Vivifies his wisdom rare :
Georgics his best fables are—
Socrates just ere he died
Myth of Æsop versified.
Reynard of the fabling Greek
Is as subtle, wily, sleek
As the fox of Teuton rhymes
Flourishing in later times.
Animal-epic's villain he,
Master of chicanery ;

Lion, Bruin, Isegrim,
All alike were game for him.
Paws and claws and teeth were vain
Matched against his subtle brain :
Wins he ever, when he tries
With his glozing tongue and lies.
Animal capable is he,
Full of resource, subtlety,
Ever helpful, good at need,
Wherefore should he not succeed ?

LAMPLIGHT *vs.* STARLIGHT.

DRUNKEN with oil and all ablaze
A proud lamp sneered at Vesper's rays ;

Boasted it shed a brighter gleam
At eve o'er valley, hillside, stream.

The night wind rising softly sighed,
And in its breath the lamp's light died.

Kindled its wick, some one again,
From biting taunt could not refrain.

" Short-lived *your* radiance seems," he said,
" Their beams the stars forever shed."

THE OAK AND REEDS.

AN Oak upon the mountain side
A thousand tempests had defied,
Erect with an unbending pride.
Its centuried roots and trunk at last
Succumbed unto an autumn blast:
A rain-swollen torrent swept it down
No more the windy upland's crown
Into a pastoral vale below.
Borne on a river's gentler flow
The Oak was soothed by whispers low
Of tuneful Reeds which bent and sighed
Over the meadow-furrowing tide.
"O Reeds," it said, "I see you frail
But still unbroken by the gale,
While I, with adamantine strength,
Uprooted lie and prone at length."
"O fallen Oak," the Reeds replied,
"Exultant in your gnarled boughs' might
You wrestled with the blasts, which smite
Wrathful your natal mountain height,
And stooped not; but when wild winds rave
We, bending low, unbroken wave."

OMPHALE.

THE famous Lydian queen, dame Omphale,
The rights of woman vindicated long
Ago. The Grecian lion-tamer strong
The crowned virago held in slavery,
Great Herakles, with temples fillet-bound,
And garb effeminate, she made him spin.
His strong hand swiftly twirled the distaff round,
While beauteous maidens made a merry din
To see him bend to work with shoulders vast,
To 'scape his mistress' anger making haste.
'T was a sweet servitude 'mong blooming girls
To card the purple fleeces soft and fine ;
Perchance he sported with their glossy curls,
While haughty Omphale in state did dine,

And Dejanira in her lonely home
Tended the hearth-fire, dreaming not her lord
Afar was faithless to her bed and board,
And with barbaric maidens lured to roam.
But for his faithlessness he quickly paid
A direful penalty of fiery pain.
His Grecian spouse to draw him back again
Innocently with venomed robe essayed
Steeped in the gore of Nessus for a charm.
The shaggy Centaur bore her when a bride
Upon his shoulders o'er Evenus' stream

And midway with lewd hand her touched ; her scream
Brought a swift arrow in his life-blood dyed,
That gushing stained the river far and wide.

ANAKREON'S DOVE.

BEAUTEOUS dove, say, whence and where
Fleetly running on the air
Fliest thou with wings, which myrrh
Still dispense whene'er they stir ?

Courier of Anakreon I ;
(" What 's that to you ? " were meet reply :)
To Bathyllos swift I fly,
Passion's minion, for the hour
Own all hearts his sovereign power,—
To Aphrodite I did belong,
But she sold me for a song.
Know my service is to bear
Amorous missives through the air.
Letters such as these you see
Waft I over land and sea,
And my guerdon is to be
(Which I crave not) liberty.
Though he bid me fly away,
With Anakreon I will stay ;
Better sure to be his slave
Than aimless roam earth and wave,
Over fields and mountains high,

Stooping when the night is nigh,
To wild-wood perch—casual fare
Scantly gleaning here and there.—

Now Anakreon's bread I share,
From his hands with dexterous bill
I unchidden snatch my fill,
And he lets me sip his wine,
As we thus together dine.

With my pinions fleet outspread
Shadow I my master's head ;
When of sport at length I tire
Sleep I on his very lyre.
You know it all—worse than crow
You 've made me chatter, man, now go.

HERODOTOS, THE FATHER OF HISTORY.

PLATÆA, Marathon, Thermopylæ,
Salamis, battles wherein Freedom won
Her primal trophies 'neath a Grecian sun,
With epic fire by him recorded be.
The mighty capitals of the foreworld he
Beheld and storied streams which past them run,
Babylon, Memphis, and Athenai free,
Whose goddess queened it o'er the Ægean Sea.—
When first he saw from his Ionian prow
The palms of mystic Egypt waving green,

Her pyramids old then, her skies serene,
And banks of Titan-citied Nilus, how
Dilated grew his eyes, as up the stream
He glided tranced as by some gorgeous dream !

Though he to Iran's king was subject born,
Strong pulsed the blood of Hellas in his breast.
From Orient's splendor to the dimmer West
He turned with fervid loyalty not scorn.
Athens he loved, the very Greece of Greece,
And saw her from her ruins re-arise
With propylæan grandeur to the skies
Beneath the splendid sway of Pericles.

His rich Ionian narrative he read
To all assembled Hellas in his prime,
The eternal record of her deeds sublime,
In eyes of all the future to be spread,
And 'gainst the hosts of Tyranny inspire
The latest ages with a kindred fire.

THE SCYTH.

TENTED still, as long ago,
Where Oxus' yellow waters flow,
Shepherd, herdsman, cavalier,
Roams the Scyth his pastures vast
Unto history's father known.
Holds the Nomad still his own :
Sealike steppe and grassy waste
To his pastoral heart more dear

Than the towered city grand,
Khiva, Balk, or Samarcand.
Eateth still this lord of herds
Flesh of horse, mare's milk, curds :
Poleward from the summer's blaze
Guide his hordes the North Star's rays,
Where cool sward the heat allays,
And the rush-fringed river strays ;
Winter-vext a milder zone
Makes he for the time his own,
Holding in barbaric fee
All the land his eyes can see.

Tidal waves of Tartar, Hun,
South no more can overrun ;
Children of the spade and plough.
Laugh to scorn the Nomad now,
Othman, Zingis, Tamerlane
O'er the earth no more can reign.
Sultan, Emir, Khan no more
Terror strike from shore to shore ;
Over all the old Levant,
Civilization's primal haunt,
Mufti, Cadi, and Pacha,
Cease to enforce barbaric law.
Blighted continents and isles
Freed are dimpled o'er with smiles.
Sultan eastward soon will tramp,
Break by Bosphorus his camp,
Haply with his followers haste
To the ancient Scythian waste.

A DORIC TEMPLE.

BRAVELY the waves of Time, O Doric fane,
Thou ridest, stemming its centuried surge
Unwrecked, with marble timbers sound, though gilt
And gaudy dyes were long since worn away.
Lone standest thou upon the lonely plain,
With stately peristyle erect as when
Thy builders heaved thy columns into place.
Familiar hast thou grown to sun and moon and stars
As are yon mountains or the neighboring sea;
Kindly the soft air of the South has dealt
With thee—sun-warm caress of balmy breeze
Using instead of sharp corrosive tooth.
O Dorian mood august of Long-ago
In pillared marble richly, grandly wrought,
Well may the Mighty Mother bid her seasons
O'er thee glide innocuous. Wast thou not
In glorious youth-time of the world her shrine,
Fuming sweet odors to her deity,
Till all the plain with incense was be-dimmed,
Smelling of far-off Araby the blest?
Upon thy centuried steps 't is sweet to dream;
Mountain and sea, lone plain and shrine are as they were
When over southern Italy the rich,

Voluptuous, Magna-Grecian life pulsed strong.
Here sitting in the summery solitude
We let our thoughts drift backward far
Into the bright Hellenic morning-red,
Till sunny sensuous faces throng around
Wherein no trace of sad reflective thought
Appears, no sense of sin or mystery,
But gladness of a free, spontaneous life
Upon the bosom large of Nature lived,
The Mother mild, with human visage tanned
By harvest-suns and wheaten tresses fair.

THE MIDLAND SEA.

MIDLAND ocean, round whose margin
Towered the city-states of old,
To their arms your surges wafted
Power and riches as they rolled.
All your depths with bones are whitened,
Bones of mariners of yore,
Wrecked and drowned by myriad tempests,
Through the ages strew your floor.

'Neath your waters they are lying
Thicker than the waves o'erhead,—
Buried nations, Tyrians, Grecians
Numberless, the ancient dead.
Gold and gems among them glisten,
Sword and helmet glimmer there,

While the shades of the unburied
Swarm above the haunted air.

Every billow has its shadow,
Tyrian, Grecian, Punic ghost ;
O'er the waters, which submerged them,
Hovers still the countless host.
Thus, through spectral armies gliding,
Sail the ships which traverse thee ;
Not a channel, but a charnel
Is thy floor, O Midland sea !

XERXES CROSSING THE HELLESPONT.

ERE o'er his bridge his countless legions rolled,
Xerxes the rising sun with pomp adored,
And in the sea from golden chalice poured
Libations—clouds of frankincense enfold
The rites, while all the ways were myrtle-strown.
The Parsee monarch prayed that he his sword
Might over vanquished Europe wave as lord,
So that his sway its utmost bounds might own.
A golden bowl he cast in Helle's stream,
Where sunk his scimetar with jewelled gleam—
Then 'gan the mighty transit—spear on spear
And helm on helm in serried splendor flowed—
Seven days and nights in sun and stariight glowed
The crossing host, ere came the tardy rear.

AMESTRIS, THE WIFE OF XERXES.

AMESTRIS, Xerxes' queen, alive entombed
In earth twice seven youths of noblest strain,
Favor of nether deity to gain,
Eblis or Ahriman. To wrinkles doomed
By gathering years she sought her charms to save
By hideous sacrifice unto the grave
Of youth and beauty quick with joy and hope.
Thus boundless power to boundless crime gave scope,
By selfishness and superstition dire
Prompted, as if anew life's waning fire
The dark rite could rekindle in her veins,
And put far off the penalty and pains
Of death, whose menace can bring dread alone
To him or her who sits upon a throne.

CAMBYSES AND THE CALF-GOD.

CAMBYSES, son of Cyrus, was an epilept ;
And, being sovereign of the world, he in
His moods outdid Orlando the Furious.
He ran amuck 'gainst Egypt's superstition,
And disentombed her mummied kings, where they
In sculptured, palm-leafed sepulchres reposed,
And had their undecaying carcasses
Most soundly whipped. Egypt's priesthood

Were scourged at his command like caitiffs vile.
'T was after his mad march southward against
The Ethiopians, who by a zone
Of burning, trackless desert dwelt intrenched.
At last, the lurid simoom blew the soil
All light and granular into burial-mounds
O'erwhelming horse and rider ; and the desert
One mighty sepulchre became, wherein
Lay massed in death far Susa's chivalry.

Returned to conquered Memphis found the king
In festal raiment all the land of Nile,
With banquets and ovations celebrating
The visible advent of a deity
Made flesh, but flesh of grazing kine, not man.

The fierce Parsee the ill-timed, general joy
Interpreted as exultation o'er
His army's loss. Mayor and aldermen
Of Memphis summoned he for explanation.
They told the jealous king that Egypt had
A god, at distant intervals who showed
Himself unto his votaries, whereat
The land rejoiced. The Magian monarch deemed
Their tale a lie, and ordered them to death.
Then summoned he the priests, and they confirmed
The ill-starred magistrates. "Has Egypt, then,
A god so tame and manageable? Produce this
Apis."

And at the word, the priests led in
A calf, with forehead starred with white, which on

His back the figure of an eagle bore,
And on his tongue a scarabæus. Rage
In eyes of fierce Cambyses shone, as he
The calf-god saw. His dagger drawing swift
He stabbed the harmless creature in the groin.

To roars of laughter changed the monarch's ire.
"O stupid knaves, and this is, then, your god!
It is a god of Egypt truly worthy!
Compact of flesh and bones, vulnerable.
But me a laughing-stock think not to make
With backs unscarred!" And then the scourge
Raised bloody weals upon the priests' bared flesh,
While in his shrine the god languished and died
And secretly his worshippers performed
His funeral rites, Cambyses' anger fearing.

For not to form enshrined of man or beast
The haughty Persian knelt; the mountains he
His altars made; his incense was the mist
Of morn; the azure air, his temple-dome;
His god, the Sun, of all the immortals fleetest,
Most luminous, life-giving, radiant.

TWO "GODLESS" KINGS.

KING CHEOPS Egypt's temples shut and barred,
And calves and onions went unworshipped for
The space of fifty years. So long he reigned.
Altars were smokeless, priests to secular toil

By royal mandate stern were strictly kept.
So Egypt's gods a long vacation had.
Meantime, the sun and river made the land,
Though prayerless, with wonted plenty teem.
As morning's ray from the Arabian sands
Touched Memnon's lips with violet and gold,
Vibrated they with wonted melody,
And when, from far Saharan solitudes,
The sun with level splendor cities steeped
And fens and palms, their farewell sweet was heard.

Labor, not piety, the fashion was
In Egypt 'neath this so-called impious king.
Like emmets toiled the multitude rearing
His pyramid, whose stones in cosmic order
Were laid and plumb'd by beams of planet, star.
So year by year the pile grew mountain-like
O'erlooking Delta and divided Nile,
Henceforth to be, like river, palms, and fens,
And crocodiles, of rainless Egypt part.
'T is hoar e'en now with forty centuries.
And Cheops' son was like his godless sire,
Foe unto superstition and its rites.
He, too, reigned half a century, and kept
The temples barred and prayerless all the time.
Thus ancient Egypt had immunity
From priestcraft for a hundred godless years,
While Nilus swelled and annual harvests bloomed.

THE FURY-HAUNTED.

O HOLY night! thy boon, at last,
Of honeyed sleep to me was given;
In slumber's sweet oblivion passed
For me thine hours 'neath cope of heaven.
I buoyant wake from pleasant dreams
In orient morning's air benign,
And hear the gush of mountain streams
And whispers of the mountain pine.

Thanks to Apollo, on my track
The dark Avengers hang no more—
Me hither chased a hound-like pack
Of phantoms grim from yonder shore.
Far o'er the plain this templed height
I saw and reached with desperate pace;
The Furies cursed Apollo's might
And left me victor in the race.

Here lustral fountains bubble clear
To purge the stains of blood away;
The venial homicide doth ne'er
To Phœbus, savior, vainly pray.
I saw his stately temple tower
There whitely in the moonlight calm,
And prostrate felt his soothing power
My spirit steep in dew-like balm.

The foam of madness from my lips
His mercy wiped—from off my soul—
So long in frenzy's dark eclipse
I felt the clouds of horror roll.
Ah, lovely stretches to the sea
Yon consecrated plain below,
Where feeds on many a flower the bee,
And perfumed breezes sweetly blow.

Here, from Apollo's sacred steep,
In joyous sanity I gaze
On mountains, plain, and sapphire deep,
Resplendent in the morning's rays ;
And others, whom the Furies goad,
For absolution hither climb,
To shuffle off guilt's leaden load
Upon this templed height sublime.

IONIAN ART.

FIRST from the halls of heaven
Ionian chisels brought
The gods, who live forever,
In gleaming marble wrought ;
To mortal eyes revealing
The glorious shapes, which fill,
Unmarred by care or sorrow,
The starred Olympian hill.
Shapes human, but uplifted
O'er death, disease, and woe,

From heights of golden ether
To watch the world below ;
Far up above the tempests,
Which shake men's dwellings frail,
The odors of his incense
They haughtily inhale ;
Which from a thousand altars
The dimmed air heavenward wafts,
While from the cup of Hebe
They drain immortal draughts.
No bestial shape defileth
Ionia's pillared fanes ;
In all her radiant temples
Transcendent beauty reigns !
Oh, many a youth ill-fated
Has from them turned away,
Dazzled and smit with passion,
Which earth might not allay !
Through hallowed groves to wander,
Pallid, distraught, forlorn,
Cursing the hour which saw him
Of less than goddess born,
And barred him from fruition,
Or gave him but to fold
For Hera's glowing beauty
A vapor dim and cold ;
Haply, through darkness gliding,
He seeks the shrine alone,
As if his burning embrace
To flesh would soften stone,
The radiant, rose-tinged marble,
Wherein to breathe and move,

Voluptuously incarnate,
  Seemed Gnidus' Queen of Love.
O Human Form! refulgent
  In Art's ideal mould,
What marvel at the worship
  Which hallowed Thee of old?
That stately temples shrined thee
  And to thee altars flamed,
And hymns of mighty poets
  Thy sanctity acclaimed?
What taint was in such ritual,
  What canker and offence?
'T was Woman's form divinized,
  Which drowned the soul in sense;
But still the Mournful Mother,
  With soft, straw-colored tress,
Keeps the fond idolatry
  Of worshipped loveliness!
Still in the heart her image,
  More beautiful for woe,
Kindles the old, old instinct,
  But with a chastened glow.
She is an ALMA VENUS,
  All-motherly and mild,
Her embrace not for lovers,
  But to enfold her child.

Unto Passion canonized
  With many a wanton rite,
Rose from Gnidus and Paphos
  The mists of incense light;
To crowned Desire a-dripping

With unguents and with wine,
To lutes lascivious moving,
Or strown in sleep supine.
Of laughter, not of sorrow,
There shone the foam-born Queen,
The mistress of the orgie,
With darkness for its screen ;
Fawned on her step the lion,
She stung the bestial heart
In spring till into slaughter
'T was maddened by her dart.
Before her cities blazing
In their ashes expire ;
She showered upon the War-god
Her caresses of fire ;
Her eyes with mirth were swimming
But with the mirth of wine,
Not downcast with a sadness
And tenderness divine !

ATHENS.

[Fifth Century, B.C.]

NO lifeless splendors crowned her,
Of swelling dome and spire,—
The ægis of her goddess
Flashed over her its fire ;
In limbs colossal imaged
Her genius seemed to stand
And beckon to the nations
Afar with outstretched hand.

How strained his eye the mariner
The violet waves across,
To catch thy first effulgence,
Athena Parthenos !
Would that thy golden spear-point
Still o'er that island sea
In mid-air proudly lifted,
A sign of port might be !

O vanished, peerless city !
From crags of sunset cloud
Great poets have rebuilt thee
In all thy splendor proud ;
When, magnet of the nations,
Upon the Ægean shore
All souls of noblest impulse
Thou drewest with thy lore.

In midnight of the ages
Titanic dost thou stand,
With fulgent tresses streaming
And lifted torch in hand ;
Upon the murk and tempest
Its sparkles shine and fly,
Until in rayless darkness
A thousand years go by.

Again thy radiance kindles
The nations into flame,
And Liberty and Reason
Again man's birthright claim.

O grand Ionian mother,
E'en to thy shattered urn
Returns the world for guidance,
Its weary tribes return.

* * * * *

O never more will sea-breeze,
As long as breeze shall blow,
To such a haven wafting
Impel the voyager's prow.
What though the bees still murmur
As blithely as of yore?
They swarm the lips of genius
In its first haunt no more.

Ear of the stranger only
Their elfin music thrills,
As for the golden honey
They roam the ancient hills;
The mountain ether cleaving
In swift melodious lines,
While over old Hymettus
The long, long summer shines.

Only the stranger's genius
Can sing, as sang of old
Thine own eternal minstrel
Thy glories manifold,
O lovely land of Pallas!
Thine immemorial streams,
Thy limpid, shining heaven,
Thy sea's purpureal gleams!

THE JUPITER OLYMPIUS AT ELIS.

WHERE is the Jove of Elis,
Which sate adored of old,
By matchless Phidias carven
Of ivory and gold?
From its large brow effusion
Of tranquil thoughts was poured
On warrior, bard, and statesman,
Who silently adored.

Thus throned on high Olympos
The Thunderer Homer saw,
When from his eyes the Muses
The mortal veil did draw.
The mighty poet's vision
The mighty sculptor caught,
And there it sate for ages
Chryselephantine-wrought.

Thus grasped the bolt of terror
The right hand of the god,
Thus rolled the locks ambrosial
To ratify his nod;
Thus perched upon his sceptre,
With ample pinions furled,
His regal bird, the Eagle,
Gazed o'er the nether world.

Nine hundred years the Grecian
Unto it homage paid,
And e'en the victor Roman
Knelt awe-struck in its shade;
At length fanatic fury
Dethroned the idol vast
And in the smelting furnace
Its rich proportions cast.

The eagle-shaded forehead
Of Zeus no more prevailed;
And in his fallen temples
The smoke of incense failed.
Was lifted o'er the nations
The thorn-encircled brow,
And to the cult of Sorrow,
They 're loyal even now.

THE ANCESTRY OF PERIKLES.

RICH Lydia was the foreworld's California,
With golden-gleaming streams and ore-veined hills;
And Crœsus, Gyges, ass-eared Midas, were
The world's primeval millionaires, the first
To history known. A Greek, Alkmaion named,
Befriended Crœsus in some juncture grave;
And, to reward him, Lydia's monarch took
Him to his treasury, and bade him thence

Bear all the gold which on his person he
Could carry. Whereupon, with boots capacious,
And cloak, one pocket vast, the greedy Greek
His vesture stuffed with gold, his boot-legs, too ;
Sprinkled his hair with gold-dust o'er ; his mouth
Filled full, until, all human semblance lost,
He issued, stuffed, distended, overweighted
With precious metal, so that Crœsus burst
In laughter loud at sight of his Greek guest,
Shapeless, effulgent with metallic sheen.
Thus, with the ore of Lydia enriched,
Alkmaion breeder of fleet steeds became,
And with his chariot won the prize at Elis,
As an Olympic victor thenceforth famed,
And 'mong the eupatrids his family
Was ranked. Megakles, a son of him,
By King of Sicyon chosen was to wed
His daughter, Agarista, o'er a crowd
Of wealthy, high-born suitors for her hand
Preferred, and from their union sprung at last
A grandchild, Agarista named, who dreamed
She brought a lion forth, and shortly bore
Great Perikles, Athenai's grandest son.

NEMESIS.

THEY reared her statue on the glorious strand
Of Salamis, where Xerxes from his throne
And insolence of power beheld o'erthrown,
Wrecked, scattered, captured, his armada grand,

Which Artemisia's valor could not save,
The lovely Amazon from Carian land.
On that famed beach the dreaded goddess stood
Moulded with rattle, emblematic whip in hand ;
Her brazen feet such waters fitly lave,
Which trampled there on Asia's swarming brood,
And saved young Freedom from her despot lewd.
O Nemesis ! though time long since erased
Thine imaged features and thy form abased,
O'er earth thou still thy righteous scourge dost
wave !

THE VENUS OF PRAXITELES.

ALL through the foreworld's pagan centuries
Gnidus and Paphos odorous were with smoke
Of sacrifice to Alma Venus fair,
Goddess of sexual love and soft desire.

Her Gnidian temple gleamed 'mid densest groves
Of cypresses and plane-trees vine-encoiled ;
Fashioned by chisel of Praxiteles,
Of lustrous Parian stone, the goddess drew
To Gnidus voyagers from every clime,
Who in her marble presence lingered witched,
Entranced by her ambrosial loveliness ;
Though wrought of brittle stone her beauteous
limbs
As lithe and supple seemed as if of flesh.
In purple bloom of budding maidenhood
The mighty artist had the goddess carved.

Her sweet lips cleft were with a witching smile,
As modest in her marble nakedness
She seemed as though in trailing drapery clad.

There stood she with her left hand interposed
To screen her nudeness from the gazer's eye,
Enkindling love and yearning, sweet desire ;
Her matchless symmetry was like a strain
Of sweetest music, waking not foul lust
And bestial appetite, but stirring soul
And heart as well as sense, to tenderest love,
Enraptured dreams of nuptial happiness.

By genius of Praxiteles, as 't were,
Made to descend from the ideal world
And personal, perceptible become
To touch and vision of her worshippers
The foam-born goddess was a living might,
A moulding and transforming power there on
Her thick-embowered, and lofty marble base,
Diffusing comeliness and beauty 'mong
The tribes who worshipped her—impressing on
Her female votaries' memories her own
Fair, faultless image,—thus daughters they bore
Of beauty exquisite, and Hellas thus
Famous became for beauteous womankind
Through length and breadth of the primeval world.

Lucian relates a temple legend told
Unto the votaries, who to Gnidus came,
How that a noble youth was smitten with
A nympholepsy for love's goddess bright

By daily gazing on her dædal shape,
Wrought by the chisel of Praxiteles.
From earliest dawn to twilight haunted he
The chancel where the goddess stood in stone,
Devouring with a hungry gaze intent
Each lineament of her immortal charms,
Until, to have his sacrilegious will
Of his insensate sweetheart, he himself
Concealed within the shrine at night, and there
Was locked in solitude. He wound his arms
About the marble cold, his lips of flesh
Glued to the statue's lips with kisses warm—
Thus all night long in loneliness he fed
His impious passion on the marble shape,
Whereof he was enamoured. Vanished he
At dawn, and nevermore was seen of men,
But traces of his midnight tryst remained.
The temple legend treasured not his name.
Thus by his deed alone, and naught beside,
The statue-smitten ravisher was known.

IPHIGENEIA IN TAURIS.

[632–640.]

Orestes.

WOULD that my corse a sister's gentle hand
In the repose of death might sadly lay!

Iphigeneia.

It may not be, for this barbarian strand
Is from thine Argive kindred far away.

Since thou an Argive art, I will assume
A sister's office at thy lonely pyre,
With streams of bright oil fed shall swift consume
Thy limbs forlorn the fierce, funereal fire ;

The flower-sucked sweetness of the mountain bee
In rich libations on thy dust I 'll pour ;
Nor shall the eye of passer fail to see
Thy tomb with many an offering wreathèd o'er.

PROMETHEUS.

MY writhing form
The wintry storm
Lashes with rain and hail and snow ;
In summer time,
When melts the rime,
The lightning's arrows round me glow.

Warble in vain
To soothe my pain
The quiring Oceanides,
Bringing the spell
Of chorded shell,
Who have come from their far-off seas.

Brute Violence
With hate intense
And swart Hephæstus nailed me here ;
While loudly rang
Their hammers' clang
O'er lonely steppe and crag austere.

The coasts of light
With squadrons bright
Of stars I nightly contemplate.
Hoar frosts of morn
Find me forlorn,
Still subject to an iron fate.

New-raised to sway,
'T were vain to pray
To tyrant with unheeding ears :
A spirit hard,
A cold regard,
In insolence of power he wears.

From flashing gyre
Of Helios fire
I snatched man to ameliorate,
Bent that my child
From savage wild
Should climb through art to high estate,

Man, whom I wrought
From clay and taught
The gods with altars to appease,
And heavenward flame
And hymned acclaim,
For which Jove bonds to me decrees.

If ceased my race
Him prayer and praise
And fragrant altar-smoke to give,

His gods and he
Would meagre be
With fast, and unapplauded live.

The Titans old
With scorn behold
The Olympian upstarts on their thrones.
But o'er them Fate
Will drive elate,
And crush at last the starry drones.

In feast and song
The bright day long
They spend, while Man with pain and toil,
Large drops of sweat
And care and fret
His food must gather from the soil.

In future time,
With craft sublime,
He will Jove's dreaded lightning wield,
And make it ply
In earth and sky
And servile to his bidding yield.

In that far day
Sky-fallen, gray
Will Jove and all his conclave be,
Shrivelled to dreams
By truth's bright beams,
While man upsprings erect and free.

PAN.

WHO hears my reed-notes wild, for evermore
Charm-struck he wanders from the haunts of men,
Waiting in forest dim on lonely shore,
Until my pipings soothe his ears again.
I am the voice of deserts, and inspire
A nameless awe amid my Oread choir.

My coat of motley is the stars and seas,
The shaggy forests, flowers, and grass and streams ;
My breath is tempest loud or summer breeze ;
My bosom heaves beneath the moon's soft beams
In foamy tidal waves of passion wild ;
And oft my heart has Echo's voice beguiled.

I am the lord of mountains which o'ergaze
With azure pinnacles the earth and sea ;
I slumber sweetly in the noontide's blaze
Lulled by the upland pine and murmuring bee ;
Swiftly the sunset-reddened crags I climb
Waiting the mystic night and stars sublime.

While sleep and silence hush the earth below,
And tribes of beasts and birds and men are still,
And huge Orion and Boötes glow,
The brooding night with melody I thrill.

My syrinx well may witch the poet's ears :
It breathes the music of the quiring spheres.

My shaggy beard is rays of sun and star ;
  My horns are flames of empyrean fire ;
The dreadful Destinies my sisters are ;
  Apollo's self I vanquished with the lyre ;
O'er shepherds, hunters, tribes of rural men,
I lordship wield, in ploughland, wood, and glen.

In pastoral Arcady, I wooed the Moon,
  Till she descended through the stilly air,
While played I on my pipes a wizard tune,
  Which made her deem my biform body fair :
The star-sown darkness veiled our dalliance sweet
Hiding the ugliness of horns and feet.

THE DELPHIC APOLLO.

THE god forever hides ;
  Eye sees not form divine—
A subtle mist he glides
  Into his holy shrine
From mountain chasm dim
  He breathes his awful spell ;
Convulsed in every limb,
  His rede the Sibyls tell.

The Pythoness disdains,
  With sacred fury fired,

To warble Sapphic strains
  As if a harp-girl hired,
Not to the idle ear
  For gain her voice she lends—
In sanctity severe
  She to the god descends.

A thousand years the world
  Has on her accents hung,
And wreaths of incense curled
  While moved her fateful tongue.
Her lips a thousand years,
  With sacred foam besprent,
Allaying human fears
  The voice divine have sent.

Effusing fountains clear
  The gladdened earth was seen
When Phœbus planted here*
  His lodge of laurel green.
Respired the cloven hill
  From caverned, dim recess
A mystic breath to thrill
  The writhing Pythoness.

Up sprang a golden shrine
  Above the breathing cave
Where erst the mountain pine
  Alone responses gave—

* At Delphi.

But e'en religions die,
And gods themselves grow old;
Beholds the visioned eye
Apollo's altars cold;

The templed cave once more
A haunt of pasturing kine;
The Sibyl's trances o'er;
Again the whispering pine.
In those far future years
Kassotis * still will flow,
But trickle as with tears
O'er wrecks of long ago.

THE TEN THOUSAND.†

BEYOND the swift Assyrian stream
The sunset softly burned,
And as they watched its farewell beam
Their hearts with longing yearned.
It seemed a radiant pathway back
To far Ionia's strand,
To wife and child, a shining track,
And sacred fatherland.

* Kassotis or Cassotis, a fountain on the Delphic steep near Castalia.

† *Οἱ δ' ἔλεγον, ὅτι ἡ δε διαβάντι τον ποταμὸν προς ἑσπέραν, ἐπι Λυδίαν και Ἰωνίαν φεροι.*—Xenophon's Anabasis, lib. iii., chapt. v., sec. 15.

"But they said that to one passing the river the way would lead to the West, to Lydia and Ionia."

A hundred hostile nations barred
That pathway to the West,
But trackless waste can more retard
Than foemen who molest.
The twilight round them thick and fast
Its deepening shadows wove,
Their mailed limbs on the earth they cast
Nor 'gainst dejection strove.

That sultry inland, vast and strange
Scarce cooled the river-breeze ;
They languished for the airs which range
Their far-off, isle-strewn seas !
In troubled dreams they heard once more
The Ægean surges beat
The headlands of Ionia's shore
With many-flashing feet.

Lone legions from the Grecian world,
Against your steeled array
The Orient's myriads, vainly hurled,
Are dashed to flying spray !
Though few and far from Hellas fair,
A hope forlorn and lone,
You 've tracked the spoiler to his lair,
The despot to his throne !

With morning's red the foe again
Will shun the lion's paw,
As Westward over mount and plain
You haughtily withdraw ;

For clouds of horsemen hovering shy
  Again will wake your scorn ;
Whose random arrows stingless fly
  From too safe distance borne.

The road is long, but day by day
  'T will dwindle while pursuit
Baffled and torn in every fray
  Will flag with limping foot.
Ten thousand swords in Grecian hands,
  Whoe'er the foe may be,
A path can hew through all the lands
  From Tigris to the Sea !

Beauty and gold, where'er they shine,
  Along the way can seize—
Can revel in the foeman's wine,
  And appetite appease ;
On Satrap's viands richly spread
  On fountain-shimmering lawns,
Where bright birds carol overhead
  And sport the soft-eyed fawns,

In Persian paradises bred
  For Beauty to caress,
On daintiest confections fed
  The pets of loveliness :
Not all the road is bridgeless stream,
  Wild steppes and gorges lone.
The Satrap's haughty turrets gleam
  O'er many a wooded zone.

Another wave of Grecian might
Shall dawnward roll afar,
And into desert ruins smite
The towers of Istakhar!

PENTHEUS,*

[Choral Ode Translated from "The Bacchæ" of Euripides.]

GODDESS holy, venerated,
O'er the earth as thou art flying,
Speeding on thy golden pinions,
Hearest thou the words of Pentheus,
How he mocks the god of banquets,
Bacchus, with his Theban mother,
God of festal joy, whose worship
Fragrant is with beauteous garlands?

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* Euripides, the Athenian dramatic poet, who was known as the scenic philosopher or free-thinker of the stage, held the popular polytheistic beliefs of his time and country in little regard. But in his tragedy entitled "The Bacchæ," written in the solitudes of Macedonia, he suddenly changes his tone from that of the habitual sceptic, free-thinker, and poetical rationalist to one of unquestioning piety, orthodoxy, and deep reverence for the mob of deities worshipped by the multitude of his contemporaries. He makes the chorus in the play from which the above extract is translated, the mouth-piece of his suddenly assumed piety. A devout feeling toward the god of wine—namely, Bacchus or Dionysus—would hardly be regarded, in these days of Law and Order Leagues and Neal Dowism, as piety at all, but rather the reverse. But the god of wine, in the estimation of the Greek polytheist of the times of

Fly the cares before his presence,
When with sound of flutes and laughter,
Joins he, ivy-wreathed, the dancers,
When the genial purple grape-juice
Flows at banquets of the immortals,
Giving sleep to human eyelids.

Lo, the end of mouths unbridled,
And of folly scorning usage,
Sure misfortune is and sorrow;
But the life of peace and wisdom
Undisturbed by evil chance is;
For the heavenly powers, though distant,
Still are dwelling in the ether
Noting all the deeds of mortals.

Sceptic cavil is not wisdom,
Nor audacity essaying
Themes beyond our narrow reason.

Euripides, was one of the most potent of deities, the inspirer of genius, the giver of a sacred enthusiasm, and the assuager and soother of human misery, care, and sorrow. Euripides was a contemporary and friend of Socrates, of Aspasia, Pericles, and Anaxagoras. It was a period of revolutionary thought. But orthodoxy was too powerful for the rationalism and rationalists of the time; for paganism or polytheism was once an orthodoxy, as much so as ever Calvinism or Romanism has been in later times. Socrates was made a martyr of free thought by this old polytheistic orthodoxy of the Athens of the days of Euripides. The philosopher Anaxagoras had to fly before it to Lampsakos and the splendid Ionian *hetaira*, Aspasia, who was the good genius of her lover Pericles, came near falling a victim to it. Pentheus, the famous mythic King of Thebes, who figures in "The Bacchæ" of Euripides, and whose impiety is

Life is brief ; and who enjoyment
Of the hour that passes scorneth,
It to vain pursuits postponing,
Him a madman justly deem we.

Would I might to Cyprus journey,
Where the Loves, the heart-appeasing,
Have their dwelling ; would to Paphos,
By its stream of hundred outlets
Fertilized, though rainless, showerless,
I might also fare a pilgrim !

To the homestead of the Muses,
To the holy hill, Olympos,

---

the subject of severe comment in the above choral ode, opposed the introduction of the Bacchic worship or Mysteries into Thebes, although the god of wine was the son of a Theban woman, Semele. The Bacchic orgies were introduced into Greece from the sensual land of Lydia in Western Asia. Pentheus furiously antagonized the young-eyed Lydian deity with his golden curls, florid cheeks, serpent-twined thyrsus, and seductive influence over young maidens, when he made his advent into Thebes. Finally Pentheus was torn limb from limb by his own mother, Agave, and a wild rout of Mænads, or wine-infuriated women, who were holding their revels in the mountains whither Pentheus had gone as a spy upon their orgies. His mother Agave entered Thebes with the blood-dripping head of her son in her clutch, supposing that it was the head of a lion. The impious conduct of Pentheus was attributed to madness. He was represented as constantly beholding objects double. In "The Bacchæ," or "Drunken Women," of Euripides, we have a most picturesque account of religious rites which once prevailed over the whole ethnic foreworld ; for the intoxicating influence of wine was believed to be the direct inspiration of a supernatural personage or god.

Lead me, Bromius, god of genius,
Of the fervid, deep emotion.
There the Graces dwell with Eros.
Thither lead me : there are lawful
Orgies of the frantic Mænads.

Bromius, son of Zeus, rejoices
In the banquet. Peace he loveth,
Peace of riches bounteous giver,
Nurse of youths, as well as plenty.

He to rich and poor has granted
Equal gladness through the wine cup,
Respite from their griefs and sorrows.

He who scorns the gifts of Bacchus
Cares not for a glad existence,
Wooes it not by dark or daylight,
Is a joyless, grim ascetic.
Shun the caviller and sceptic :
With the multitude accordant
We subscribe to custom, usage.

BAFFLED PURSUIT.

[From "The Bacchæ" of Euripides.]

O GALLANT hart ! thy speed has won,
Thy savage foes are left behind ;
Defeated, baffled, and outrun,
Their bayings die upon the wind.

In loneliness exulting now,
  Thou slack'st thy pace beside the stream
Whose waters through the dim woods flow,
  And twinkle in the sunset's beam.

No foe is here, nor man nor hound,
  But all is silent, green, and still;
And soon the moon will glitter down
  On waving bough and tinkling rill.

Here couched beneath the summer spray,
  While dewdrops cool thy panting breast,
O! breathe the stilly night away
  In tranquil dreams and sylvan rest.

THE GREEK PHILOSOPHERS.

THE Greek philosophers—they were the monks,
  Ascetics stern of paganism—reason
In them kept sense in vassalage to soul—
They knew the world of ear and eye and smell
And touch and taste a passing cloud—no more,
That conscious spirit is reality
Alone. They were a needed tonic for
The common herd each other jostling in
The stye of sense for pudding, pelf, and power.
They wore as costume of their order a cloak,
Which, as 't was seedy oft and overworn,
Was called a *tribōn*. Spectators they were,
Not actors in life's struggle. Through them spoke
The sovereign reason with impressive voice,

The sovereign reason, which is Deity.
E'en such as all conventionalities scorned,
And turned faces of apathy and pure
Indifference to all the usages,
Beliefs, and customs of society,
As needed not by spirits, who ever dwelt
Aloft upon the higher reason's plane,
Were glorious idealists, champions
Of truth. From Zeno's porch a voice
Rang forth, the voice of duty high, that sounds
Forever down the ages with clear note—
Unto Demokritos, Epikuros
The mysteries of nature were laid bare—
Sun-worshipping Pythagoras could find
Proportion, order, harmony throughout
The universe, which is a unit in
Variety, so that all sounds of life,
Of oceans, cities, forests, throngs of men,
Are one vast monotone and thus one force,
One might, one heart of hearts, one soul informs
And agitates the seeming complex world.

ANAXAGORAS.

ἡ Ἰωνικὴ αἵρεσις.
Pseudo-Plutarch.

GODS everywhere ; in water, earth, and air !
Like to locusts in a land drought-stricken,
So that all rational investigation
Of nature is deemed intrusion, trespass

On the gods, deserving death or exile.
I did but call the sun a globe of fire,
Ignoring Helios, the charioteer,
When a dull demagogue, impeaching me,
Alleged I set at nought the deities
In whom the state believes. Heinous offence!
E'en mý friend Perikles is powerless here
To save me from the demon-fearing mob,
And I must fly forthwith to Lampsakos,
Where fire and water to the thinker are
Not under interdict; forbidden fare.

The mother-city of our race is too
Much demon-awed. The old Pelasgic fear,
The primitive ploughman's superstition,
Still haunts these autochthonous Ionians,
Which we have lost, transplanted over seas
To a kindlier soil and sunnier clime.
Commercing with the nations, here-and-there,
We wear the yoke of usage, worship lightly,
Knowing that manners and religions change
With climates, which these untravelled know not.
Therefore our spirits are not oppressed by
Custom, tyrant dull, but, free and curious,
Look not through eyes of stupid wonder and
Blind adoration of we know not what;
But with shrewd, rational glance survey the world
Of sense, earth, heaven and seas, cities of men,
Rivers and ocean, sun and moon and stars,
And what befalls them, as tempest, eclipse,
Pestilence, earthquake, phenomena as

Natural as sunrise, though less frequent,
Keeping our forms erect, as they have grown,
From base prostration fitting only slaves,
The servile children of the morning-lands,
With open eyes and ears by reason guided.

Thus looking, thus surveying, our wise men
Of Samos, Miletos, Mitylene,
Ephesos, Colophon, Clazomenæ,
Have had dawn on them dimly a vision
Glorious, august, of an ordered world
Instinct with reason, order's principle,
Harmonious, grand, eternal, self-evolved
By strong, primordial necessity,
From ever-during seeds, atoms, or germs
(For from nothing nothing can only come),
No wretched domain of fickle deities
With human lusts, passions, and appetites,
Exorable, whimsical, unnatural men,
Greedy of fumes of incense, throned above
The mountain-peaks, where nought but herbless
stone,
Wild winds, and cold thin ether freeze the blood,
But infinite, a Cosmos, such the name
We give unto the ineffable All,
The universe coherent, which a might
Eternal fills, pervades through time endless,
Beginningless, and boundless space working
Forever without haste or rest. Reason
Delighted order finds, proportion, law,
And not merely fickle personal will,

So that the spheres make music as they roll
With motions calculable in numbers.
This is the Ionic heresy, or school,
Which we lovers of wisdom have founded
In the far future to remould the world,
And lift the grovelling race long ages hence
To plane of reason and self-government.

But what a fearful chasm yawneth 'twixt then
And now ! when we lone beacons, few and far
Between, our radiance shed o'er mournful wastes
Of ignorance and lurid superstition,
A few light-points only visible in
Hellas colonial, not the mother-land.

Century after century shall elapse
In darkness, blood, and superstition, our words
Talismanic hid in a language dead
Meanwhile—when again hierophants shall
Rise of Truth, links of the Hermaic chain
Of wisdom, they shall arise successors
Of ourselves and reason's supremacy assert
Once more, the clue resuming where we let
It drop, the clue of nature's labyrinth.
O quest of truth, hallowed, august, serene !
E'en in thought's dawn glimpses of her have flashed
Upon my vigils while I sleepless scanned
The starry heaven, or turned my thoughts within,
Like the lone nympholept in grove or glen
Sojourning where immortal charms have 'witched

His eyes, thereafter with disdain beholding
Meaner beauty. Seeing her features e'en
Partially in holy hours of musing
And rapt contemplation I cast from me
Wealth, for I was princely-born, opulent,
And wholly gave myself to her for life.

Meantime, I have brought o'er Philosophy,
Born on the Asian isles and continent,
The outposts of our race, to Athens, cradle
And metropolis of the Ionian, re-risen
From her ashes in marble loveliness
And splendor, with gardens, groves, porticos,
Fit haunts for wisdom's sons in future years,
Focus and central seat of meditation.
I have done my work. Even to have taught
One pupil like Perikles, to have inspired
His soul with thoughts which, uttered from the bema,
Awe fickle demos almost to worship,
Were glory enough, if glory were my aim,
Not to omit my other disciple,
Euripides, scenic philosopher,
Melodious master of iambic verse,
From tragic cothurns and heroic heights
Descending to the plane of real life,
Potent to stir the sacred fount of tears,
Speaking the language of the human heart—
A tongue no lapse of time can antiquate,
E'en though the dialect he wields and moulds
Into such siren harmonies were dead,

Or living only on the written scroll,
A silenced speech, unvoiced, unsyllabled.

He, too, has scattered with a liberal hand
My thoughts unto the listening throngs gathered
To witness scenic pomps, with ravished ears
To hear the rolling dithyrambic strains,
The choral hymns to Dionusos chanted,
And comic lee-songs in the purple spring.

O sweet symposia ! hours of glowing converse
With Perikles, Euripides, Aspasia,
And other selectest spirits, when wit
And wine, and song, and garlands stirred the soul
To bright communion, heart in heart melting,
Ye will nevermore return to glad me !
Though well I know all places are alike
To Hades near—to mine own land I will
Return to die, mingling my ashes with
The ashes of my sons already dead
Before their sire—unnatural death ! Perchance
My fellow-citizens will ask what honors,
In recognition of the fame I sought
Not but have won, they shall do me dead in
Brazen urn imprisoned, a little dust !
To show I am not one morose, austere,
Though given to thought, to meditation given,
I will have my birthday an annual high-tide
Made, a festal time for youths and children.
It will keep my memory green and dear to
Hearts unworn and fresh, gushing with gladness,

By morning's red, by dews of morn still bathed.
I have indeed disturbed the quiet of
This ancient town of Pallas since I came,
And, as the wits say, opened my thought-shop
Here, and began to walk on air and gaze
At stars. New phrases are in vogue, and doubt,
The mood of reason, aroused, awakened,
And of the canonized absurdities
Of Eld ashamed, is widely prevalent,
A healthful sign ! for Athens, the city
Of the blue-eyed Maid of Wisdom, is not
To remain a mere mart of traffic, famed
For figs, oil, pottery, dædal works of art
And matchless coinage, and swift triremes o'er
The waves speeding like coursers. Renown
Of other sort she is to win henceforth,
Metropolis of thought, she is to be
The luminous pharos of the nations far
And wide through space and time refulgent shining.

I, thought's torchbearer from Ionia,
Have kindled here a flame no time can quench.
But they ask why with usage, custom, fight,
Why seek to overthrow the ancient rites
From the thatched hut of the Pelasgic hind
And venerable shrines, groves, oracles,
Descended ? Heroes and patriots
And singers inspired have practised them,
Revering them, at Marathon repelled
The Mede with dauntless breasts. 'T is false
To say we seek their overthrow, unless

Knowledge confusion to them brings, knowledge
And light. If so, why then they ought to perish.
Change is healthful. Stagnation putrefies.
'T is true the rabble's gods are not with us
A current coin. The pathway of truth
Wherein we walk leads from the shrines away,
Where grovels the populace, beseeching
Shapes of stone for cures, for wealth and safety
On the waves. There was a god in my time
Fettered the Hellespont, or feigned he did ;
Behind him came from the loins of sunrise
Legions innumerable, his dull slaves.
This god at least was visible, the rest
We take on trust from legends, myths of bards,
But even Homer owns his gods to be
By strong necessity environed, girt.
For the forces of the universe are
Not personal, nor by persons wielded.
Persons like to the leaves and flowers of spring
Appear and disappear in generations
Quick perishing but evermore renewed,
While nature's forces are forever young,
Her hues unfaded and her rays undimmed.
The red of dawn, its dews are lovely now
As in the beginning, but impertinent
That word. The universe knows not end
Nor beginning, only eternal change
Of matter eternal. Phenomena,
Which make the world of sense, of ear and eye,
In ceaseless flux around, beneath, above,
Are flowing. But at the universe's heart,

As on some sacred hearth, the flame of might,
Of life, which animateth all, burns on
Forever, fountain of force unseen, one
And the same 'neath all this masquerade, this
Manifold variety, which charmeth
Sense. They asked me once at Lampsakos whether
The mountains there would ever become sea.
Were not our generations deciduous
As the generations of the leaves we should behold
Dry land where once the wealthy mart with
Haven mast-thronged up-reared its citadel,
And, again, where unwieldy monsters rolled
In the green chambers of the brine cities,
With streets, with chariots, festal pomps.
Vision august of Truth mine inner eye
Hath seen, would that the race might see thee too!

CONSCIENCE.

[From Sophokles.]

ITS laws and dictates in celestial air
Engendered were, in reason pure enrolled.
Thus are they current, binding everywhere,
For God is in them and they grow not old.

DIOGENES.

LIFE, to its lowest terms Diogenes
Reduced, or tried to ; business of living
He simplified with staff, wallet, well-worn
Cloak, lentils, and water. Hunger and thirst,
Those still returning wolves, he tried to tame,
Them pampering not with dainty cheer such as
The parasites of purple tyrants fed.
His quick retort was like a bite indeed,
Hence came the name of dog to him, and all
The sect of wisdom-lovers of his type,
Who, with stout cudgels and unbridled tongues,
The cities of the Grecian foreworld roamed,
The sugar-plum scramble of their race disdaining.
The universal slavery to sense—
Fame, power, and pelf, alike they scorned, and beauty's
Charm on them its magic vainly tried.
Albeit the scandal ran that Lais was
Complaisant to Diogenes, as if
The lean ascetic her caresses sought
Or cared to win. The cynics scoffed at gain,
The temple's colonnades of landlords made
Them independent—these and a mild clime—
* * * On the evil days
Of Hellas fallen, when her soft citizens
Their country's battles fought with hireling swords,

Diogenes was full of wrath, seeing
The semi-barbarous Macedonian
Trampling the liberties of Greece, destroying
Autonomy of all her city-states,
Those glorious but narrow hives of wit
And wisdom, poetry and eloquence,
Dispersing Hellas, as it were, so that
With leaven of her mind the outer world
Might be at length infused and Hellenized.
Heedless of the divinity that shapes
Man's ends Diogenes was wroth—grimly
He bade them bury him upon his face,
As all things shortly would be upside down.
Son of a money-changer of Sinope,
A Grecian outpost on the Euxine shore,
The scandal went its coinage he debased,
He or his sire, with sanction of Apollo.
Howe'er that was, exile or not, he went
To Athens to hear the austere Antisthenes,
Who, for his churlish tongue, was called dog
Pure and simple—Haplocyon. Menaced
He with his staff Diogenes, when first
He to his lectures went, repelling pupils.
But Diogenes, thirsting for wisdom,
Willing to incur a broken head for it,
Persisted till the harsh master was o'ercome—

* * * * * * *

He called himself cosmopolite, citizen
At large of the world, mocking the Athenians
With their inordinate local conceit,
Autochthonous exclusiveness and pride

Of race and country, for they seemed to think
The sun itself just outside Attica
Arose and set. They wore as ornaments
And tokens of their own ascent up from
Their olive-bearing soil grasshoppers wrought
Of gold, than which they were more garrulous.
Haughtily hospitable was Athens
To famous wits from other lands, who sought
Her studious walks and groves. Demokritos
No recognition from her sages found ;
Her greatest moralist was a Semitic
Alien, he of the Porch, from Cyprus hailing ;
While soft Cyrene sent the hedonist,
The wealthy Aristippus, thrall of sense.

* * * * * * *

The famous Cynic's tub was myth, perhaps ;
An Attic house was scarcely more than tub
In size. Lucian him paints as wildly up
And down, his tub rolling, in troublous times
Of popular excitement, as if he
Participated in the general stir ;
He, who to plane of sheer indifference
And apathy to fortune's gifts had climbed.
'T was scenic contrast, the Cynic seated
In his tub receiving Alexander
With pride and scorn as great as gleamed in eyes
Of Asia's conqueror, who awed the world.
He could do naught for grim Diogenes
But unobstructed sunshine leave to him.
No love was lost 'twixt him and Plato, whom
He deemed garrulous and diffuse, verbose,

Clouding, disguising truth with many words,
And overfine with his ideal cups
And archetypal tables. For with him
Wisdom or philosophy was not so much
Fine talk, and endless subtle interlocution
As a mode of life, as actual living,
Which was, he deemed, the art of arts.
Through Athens, Corinth,
For years, their streets and porticos, stalked this
Strange figure, incarnate protest, reproof
Of a degenerate commonwealth lost to
Its old renown, from an imperial sway
Content to sink to base servility.
He tramped to Elis to attend the games
And scan the mighty throng assembled there ;
Also to Delphi, Holy See of Greece,
Unique among her cities, on its height
O'erlooking all the Pleistus-gorge below
And Cirrha's plain, with olive trees shaded
Of foliage silver-gray, and violet waves
Of Corinth's gulf, Sea of Lepanto now,
A stout pedestrian with staff in hand.
No inn he needed 'neath that Grecian sky,
From mountain spring or rivulet quenching
His thirst. * * *
Finally,
The haughty sage was found, weary with years,
Dead in his worn cloak, wrapt, in the Cranèum.
They thought he was asleep, till from his face
They drew his cloak away. 'T was said
Life irking him he held his breath and died.

On the same day in Babylon, his last
Breathed Alexander dying of debauch.
The wags of Athens said his corse would scent
The world with odor of its rottenness.
A pillar o'er Diogenes was reared,
Surmounted by a dog of Parian stone;
The dog was totem of the Cynic tribe.
Statues of bronze were also raised to him
By his countrymen, his grandeur honoring.
* * * * * *

THE GHOSTS OF MARATHON.

AT dead of night arise
From barrows, where they lay,
The warrior dead, who fought
In Marathon's fierce fray.

In gold cuirasses mailed,
The Persian lords once more
In shadowy charge are seen,
Careering as of yore.

Back from the steeled array
Of hoplites stern recoil
The shattered cavaliers
Strowing the crimson soil.

Wild battle-cries are heard
Upon the night-wind chill,
The pæan of the Greeks
With trumpet-clangors shrill,

The Medes' barbaric yell
From throats unnumbered sent,
Where fiercest glows the fight
The air with groans is rent.

Confusion, rout, and fear
At length the haughty Mede
In flying squadrons send
Shoreward with panic speed.

The warrior goddess shakes
Her ægis o'er the foe ;
With harvest of the slain
The fields her legions strow.

Thus at the midnight hour
On Marathon's lone plain,
In shadowy squadrons rise.
The slayers and the slain.

CHARON'S OBOL.

PLACE an obol in his hand,
Ferriage to the shadow-land
Lest the boatman grim and hoar
Leave him on the hither shore,
Wafting not his spirit o'er
Where the shades in twilight dwell
Haunting meads of Asphodel.
See how fast his fingers cold

Charon's penny grasping hold!
Now his shade will swiftly glide
Darkling o'er the Stygian tide
Join the joyless phantom band
Swarming all the nether strand,
Lengthening as the swift years roll,
For each moment sends a soul
Flitting to that dreary coast,
Swelling still its shadowy host.

THE FALL OF ATHENS.

[B.C. 84.]

E'EN in her degradation she was still
Focus of light, though o'er her bearing sway
A mountebank enforced his murderous will,
While Sylla's legions pressed her night and day.
The eternal lamp went out leaving in gloom
Athena's guardian helm and awful brow;
Uncoiled and dead her serpent lay below
Her marble sandals, sign of coming doom;
About her knees her priestess moaning clung
With sobs and tears within the shrine alone;
At midnight loud the Roman trumpets rung
A fearful peal, that stilled the vestal's moan.
With blood the violet-crownèd city streamed,
While o'er her fall the young moon softly beamed.

LUCIAN.

I.

THOU honey-bee of later, larger Greece,
All flowers of Grecian song and Grecian lore
Of every age, you sucked, and evermore
Their sweetness hived in tomes, which never cease
To charm new generations, as they rise,
Tales, essays, dialogues, that every phase
Of that rich, old Hellenic life unfold.
Sage, sophist, rhetor, and impostor bold,
Athenai's soiled doves fair your page displays :
We hear and see them through your ears and eyes.
Voluptuous description, wisdom, wit,
Flow intermingled from your easy pen.
We know the world you knew, its things and men ;
Our own time leaving through you enter it.

II.

That world was waning : e'en its gods were old,
Their nectar stale and withered Hebe's bloom.
But, still, over the Ægean's wave did loom
The Maid of Wisdom wrought of ivory and gold ;
The bright Levant with cities manifold
Still gleamed,—for countless marble fanes found room
On isle and mainland. East and West had met

In Egypt's many-languaged mart, which yet
Survives. There Grecian reason was defiled
By dreams of Orient enthusiasts wild
And turned to mystical madness. At last,
A throng of filthy anchorets o'erpowered
Savan and sage, and mental twilight lowered
O'er earth blotting the glorious Grecian past.

PALMYRA—ZENOBIA.

EYE of the East, in which commingled glowed
Hellas and Araby in olden days,
No more thy pillared splendor o'er the waste
Of sand, City of Palms ! thou heav'st in pride :
But on the desert are thy columns strowed
Cumbering its lonely bosom far and wide.

A gorgeous morning vision was thy queen,
Zenobia, the peerless Palmyrene—
Greece, Yemen in her starry glances shone ;
Palms waved and spice-winds blew about her throne.
And yet the dull, imperial brute prevailed
Against her charms and arms, ill-starred brunette!
Albeit her desert horsemen fiercely hailed
An arrowy sleet his panting hosts to fret.

JULIAN AT EPHESUS.*

THROUGH strong compulsion have I hitherto
With tongue and knee adored or seemed t' adore
The poor, dead God of Galilee, and thus
Been made against my will a hypocrite.

* In the middle of the fourth century of the vulgar era reigned Julian, surnamed the Apostate, because he endeavored to inaugurate a general reaction against Christianity in the interest of the old Olympian polytheism. Julian was educated at Athens, and there imbibed a profound enthusiasm in behalf of the fair humanities of the old religion of Greece. In the twentieth year of his age, he was, according to Gibbon, delivered into the hands of Maximus, a pagan philosopher and mystagogue, who made him secretly the subject of an initiation into the chief pagan mysteries. In the caverns of Ephesus and Eleusis, Gibbon says, the mind of Julian was penetrated with sincere, deep, and unalterable enthusiasm. From that moment, he consecrated his life to the rehabilitation and restoration of the sway of the gods of the Olympian dynasty, of the deities of Homer and the Scipios, as against the new faith which his uncle Constantine had established in the Roman Empire. But, though he wielded the whole power of that empire in behalf of his reactionary movement, it was too late. Mount Olympos had to succumb to Mount Zion. Julian was a scholar and a voluminous "literary fellow," his writings still surviving. But his attempt at a polytheistic reaction failed. The *Zeitgeist* invariably plants its foot upon all such attempts at reaction, which are simply endeavors to put back the hands upon the dial-plate of Time.

Not long will I be such, but soon my voice
Shall truly announce the feelings of my heart,
Which hitherto repressed have burned within
Indignantly. Soon armed with might imperial
Will I confront the throngs of filthy monks
And warring factions, who in name of Christ
Each other would exterminate from earth,
And world-wide tolerance proclaim of all
Religions, whatsoe'er their name or origin,—
Such tolerance, as erewhile was enjoyed,
Before the faith of Christ became supreme.
Still over all the Grecian world intact
And glorious the temples of the gods
Stand in their many-columned majesty,
The matchless fanes of that primeval cult,
Which sowed the earth with shapes of carven beauty,
All Hellas filling with a populace
Of heroes, laurelled athletes, bards—in bronze;
Each vale and every mountain glen adorning
With beauteous shrines and forms of loveliness.
These glorious relics of the sacred Past
Have long been menaced by fanatics vile,
Haters of Art and Poesy, to whom
Beauty and harmony and wisdom high
Are an offence, abomination.
My power shall make innocuous their threats.

Hail, temple-city fair of Ephesus!
Midnight now reigns above your shrine colossal,
While arrow-loving Artemis, aloft

Over her altars here, seems lovingly
And lingeringly from cloudless skies to shine.
Virgin august, rejoicing in thy shafts,
Co-regent with thy brother Sun of heaven,
The forest solitudes filling with sudden
Irruption of hounds and shouting Oreads,
Must thy divinity wane, as wanes thine orb
At intervals, but with full sheen to shine
Again as bright as ever? Thus kneel I
In thy midnight beam and swear, when sceptred
Power shall make me strong, my strength shall
In thy service wielded be against all who
Would thy glorious empery o'erthrow.
Mother of months, star-sandalled, chaste, and fleet,
Henceforth thy votary I am by rites
Of mystical consecration, henceforth
Thy fulgent face shall be my sign in heaven,
Whether a plenilune or crescent bright
It shines o'erhead,—my sign, by which I'll conquer
More surely than Imperial Constantine,
My uncle, did, when saw he in the sky
The crucified Judæan's Cross or feigned
He saw at noonday on the battle's edge.
No base, fanatic cult from Palestine
Shall from my heart dislodge the festal gods
Of bright Olympos,—Zeus, lyred Apollo,
Violet-crowned Athênê, patroness
Of that fair city, eye of sacred Greece,
And Greece of Greece in genius, sanctity,
The immemorial seat of art and song
And high philosophy, where learned I lore

Of sages of the past, lore to my soul
More dear than crown and sceptre, baubles bright
Of that imperial sovereignty which soon
I shall inherit and wield in cause
Of reason, wisdom, tolerance, and truth.

THE END.

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